

Questa del Rio News

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Questa VFW Chapter in Danger of Closing Amidst Low Membership



Courtesy Photo

Questa VFW Serves as Community Gathering Place for Local Meeting

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The local Questa VFW chapter 7688 is at risk of closing its doors and operations permanently amidst low membership numbers. Commander Danny Garcia says it's a troubling predicament.

"We don't have the membership we've had in years past. We used to have a lot of involvement from the Korean War veterans and WWII veterans but many of them have passed away. It's gotten so low that we can't have a quorum to host meetings," Garcia says.

While the aging population is a big challenge, the number of younger veterans who have served in a foreign war and are interested in joining is also limited. "I approach people and ask them to join, but it's more than just joining. It's being actively involved, attending meetings, planning community events to give back to the people. That's where we are just not able to get the commitment."

Historically, the Questa VFW has had a big presence in the community. They used to run the community bingo on Sundays until the state took over the gam-



Courtesy Photo

Proud WWII Veteran Aaron Rael Sr. dons his Post 7688 uniform cap. Rael passed away in 2009. He and his brothers were proud, active members of Post 7688.

ing division, creating many roadblocks for veterans to continue as volunteers.

Additionally, the VFW has traditionally given out scholarships to graduating seniors from Questa High School from money raised in fundraising through community breakfasts and poppy flower donations. This was done to reinvest

in the youth in the community. As the membership numbers have grown dismal, many of these efforts have been put on hold. "There are months we won't open the building, but we still have to pay for gas, electric utilities because we're deemed a commercial building. Sometimes, that has to come out of my own pocket because I don't have a way to make up the costs," Garcia says.

In addition to the community involvement, the VFW building serves as a central gathering place for funeral comidas, showers, community meetings, and graduation celebrations. Additionally, the Questa VFW manages the working permit from the U.S. Forest Service to operate the Pueblito Cemetery.

"The closure of the Questa VFW would have cascading effects on the Questa community. We have historically done a lot and want to continue to do a lot, but we need support and involvement of our local veterans," Garcia continues.

If you're interested in joining the Questa VFW, you can contact Danny Garcia directly at (575) 779-6214.

Got a story? Email us at editor@questanews.com

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The Many Meanings Of Memorial Day

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Memorial Day takes on a different meaning for everyone.

For the 18-year-old man who just left for basic training, it means the family will be watching the headlines intently over the next several months as they await to hear which area of the world their loved one may be stationed.

To a family whose loved one is deployed somewhere overseas, it means keeping your phone with you at all times, should you ever need to take a call from the government telling you that your beloved is not okay.

To a veteran who has served, it means waking up in a cold sweat in the middle of the night from terrors of wartime trauma.

To one who has lost their beloved to the conflict of war, it means clutching onto their last memories at home as you grieve their loss, hundreds of

miles away.

To the one who returned alive, it means serving in your local VFW for veteran-sponsored activities, showing up for parades, donning your side cap and membership shirt as you continue to proudly salute Old Glory.

To the one who returned broken, it means finding ways to cope with your pain and find normalcy, stumbling to find your bearings with limited support.

To most, it means a three-day weekend filled with bonfires, cookouts, motorcycles, camping, fishing, family gatherings, and the unofficial start to the summer.

As you plan and celebrate your upcoming Memorial Day holiday, remember to think of veterans and thank them. So many of them gave and sacrificed in ways it's often impossible to explain, so we can have this wonderful summertime three-day holiday.

Happy Memorial Day!



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE MAY ISSUE OF QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS!

AEDON HANNON, ALICE FORDHAM, BARBARA TRACY, BERNA TRUJILLO, BRITTANY MAES, BRYCE FLANAGAN, CHARLENE R. JOHNSON, "COOKING CLASSY," DANIELLE PROKOP, DAWN PROVENCHER, DESTINEE VIGIL MARTINEZ, DIANE LEON, DUANE ABEL, ELLEN WOOD, GHOST WRITER MIGUEL, HIGH DESERT HOUNDS, J. ORTEGA, JAY BOUCHARD, JOHN WALSH, LINDA CALHOUN, LIZ VIALPANDO-POE, LOUISE GALLEGOS, MARIA MEDINA, MARTA GLOVER, MEGAN MYSCOFKI, NASH JONES, NAOMI GOMEZ, PAULINE ORTEGA, PEGGY TRIGG, QUESTA CREATIVE COUNCIL, SCOTT SUTTON, SHARON NICHOLSON, "SHE LIKES FOOD," SPENCER WARNOCK, SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN, TERESA DOVALPAGE, "THE HEALTHY FOODIE," TONER MITCHELL

A Mother's Advice For Mother's Day

By STAFF WRITERS

Beloved mother and grandmother Pauline Ortega was born in Denver, Colorado. She was raised in Cerro and moved to Questa after she married Jake Ortega, who she has been married to for 60 years.

Together, they have four sons: Jake Jr., Mark, Robert, and Victor, as well as 10 grandchildren, all of whom she loves dearly.

We spoke with her about what motherly advice she would give to our readers for Mother's Day.

"We were very fortunate to have raised our boys in Questa. They were involved in sports, and after high school they pursued their dreams. I think it's a great thing for kids to be involved because it keeps them from getting in trouble or getting involved with the wrong crowd," she says.

Raising her sons, Pauline says she and her husband were committed to teaching them obedience and re-



Courtesy Photo

Pauline Ortega

spect—most especially for their elders, grandparents, and teachers. Ensuring they knew the difference between right and wrong were big priorities for Pauline and Jake.

"My son Robbie jokes that he still remembers when we'd be in church and I'd pinch him if my boys were misbehaving," she says as she giggles. Most times, she said all it took was a stern look at her boys for them to know they had to behave.

When her sons were small, Pauline didn't work and this was a privilege she

recognizes is no longer possible for most parents. "I was blessed, but with the changing times, it's not possible to live on one income, so both parents have to work to get by. I would say that's why quality time with your children is so important. It can be as simple as coloring or watching a movie with them, just giving them your undivided attention so they know they're loved—that really matters."

Pauline also says her husband Jake was committed to teaching her sons about the outdoors and they were often fishing, hunting, or camping. "Teaching them these lessons and values was also something we felt was important for our boys and they still very much take part in it to this day."

Ultimately, Pauline says she would tell our readers, "Do your best. There is no guide to parenting children but ensuring you instill values of respect in them while ensuring they know you are present and care—these are things that are going to help your children grow up and thrive."

POEM OF THE MONTH

Mother Goose

From May first, it's Mother Goose,
Watch out, cuz she's on the loose. Around the table
people gather,
To tell nursery rhymes and chatter. "An old lady was
living in a shoe,
Had no bone for the dog to chew. A top the hill at the
food pantry,
They give commodities—gallantly." Moral of the
this aged old story,
There is no need to cry or worry. Don't leave Mom
sitting on a stump,
You might get a swat on the rump.

—Señor Miguel
Ghost Writer

Remembering Amber Archuleta

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER LITA MEAD

The eighth-grade class at Questa Junior Senior High School paid tribute to their classmate, Amber Archuleta, on what would have been her 14th birthday.

The class, along with their teacher Mr. Spencer Wornock, principal Mrs. Kimber MacDonald, and several other staff members, planted a lilac bush and a dahlia on school grounds on April 17, 2024.

Mrs. MacDonald also made red velvet cupcakes, Amber's favorite, just as she had made them for her 13th birthday.

Somewhat of a prankster, Amber had a way of joking with adults and her peers. Many of the Questa staff attended



Courtesy Photo

Students, staff and family of Amber Archuleta gather at Questa Junior Senior High School to plant a lilac bush and dahlia flowers to commemorate what would have been Amber's 14th birthday

and Amber's family also was invited to the planting, taking comfort in seeing all her friends participate in the occasion. It was an honor bestowed upon a

fun-loving, young teenager, tragically taken too soon. Her aunt, Glenda Archuleta, stated to the crowd that Amber is missed tremendously.



Courtesy Photo

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The Society of Professional Journalists declares four principles as the foundation of ethical journalism and encourages their use in its practice by all people in all media. We have adopted these principles as our own:

- Seek Truth and Report It.
- Minimize Harm.
- Act Independently.
- Be Accountable and Transparent.

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Mattress Mary sells Alamosa Business to Locals

By STAFF WRITERS

Mary Domito, known as “Mattress Mary” of Taos Lifestyle Furnishings has sold her Alamosa-based store, Alamosa Home, to locals Hunter Jack and Erin Keck.

Domito recently expanded her Taos Lifestyle operation and moved into a 24,000-foot space in Taos, New Mexico, and commented on the sale. “I started and branded Alamosa Home after discovering the vibrant town of Alamosa and its surrounding communities. It’s been a wonderful nine years but my future lies in Taos. The store is deserving of local stewards who can take it to the next level.”

Having purchased the Alamosa Home store in 2015, Domito worked to brand her business to fit the style of Alamosa and the San Luis Valley. According

to a press release, she is quoted as saying, “I started and branded Alamosa Home after discovering the vibrant town of Alamosa and its surrounding communities. It’s been a wonderful nine years but my future lies in Taos. The store is deserving of local stewards who can take it to the next level.”

The Alamosa Home store serves six counties in the San Luis Valley and carries fine furnishings, mattresses, bedding, lighting, and rugs. It also specializes in designing creative bedrooms for children.

The release goes on to say that new owners, Jack and Keck, are excited to realize their dream of owning a business in their home town and becoming more involved with the community. Keck will continue her work as the executive director of the Alamosa Chamber of Commerce and will oversee marketing for Alamosa Home. Jack, a former sales manager for Del Mar Carpet One in Alamosa, is well versed in sales and customer service. Jack’s family has been in Alamosa for five generations and will bring the “home” to Alamosa Home.

“I am excited about this opportunity to build on the legacy Mary has created here in Alamosa,” said Jack. “Alamosa Home provides an opportunity for growth and a way to become more involved with the communities of the San Luis Valley.”

The release affirms that Alamosa



Courtesy Photo

Left to right: Tyler Keck, Erin Keck, Hunter Jack, Mary Domito sit together for a photo

Home’s line of quality furnishings, industry-leading brands, and dedicated customer service will continue without interruption. Kelly Geddes, the store manager with a nine-year tenure at Alamosa Home, will help to ensure the transition is seamless. Domito will be available as a consultant if needed.

In addition to maintaining the continuity of products and services that Alamosa Home is known for, Jack commented on the new owner’s visions



for the future. “There is a lot of opportunity for growth. We want to explore the commercial space as well as provide furniture for families with second homes in our area. We’re excited to expand on the store’s successful foundation.”



Insights Into Real Estate Trends

As your local real estate professional, I have the privilege of showcasing why northern New Mexico is an incredible place to live. But it’s amusing how often people from the east coast ask, “You live where? In Mexico? Do they only speak Spanish there?” No, no, it’s New Mexico—the land of enchantment! Interestingly, whether you’re a native or a transplant to New Mexico, many people outside the state struggle to pinpoint its

location, and some have even questioned if it’s part of the United States. Truly, New Mexico is a hidden gem.

And while I’d love to focus solely on our delicious Hatch green chile and amazing natural beauty, it’s essential to acknowledge the significant downsides of rural life in northern New Mexico when considering a home purchase. Although we call the land of enchantment home, it’s important to recognize that it may not be the ideal destination for everyone.

In this column, I’ll discuss some of the advantages and disadvantages of living in New Mexico, based on my own experiences. When discussing relocation with a potential buyer, there are common themes that tend to come up as they weigh the pros and cons of settling in rural northern New Mexico. Some of the most prevalent topics follow.

“You don’t have a Target nearby?” Well, there’s one in Santa Fe, about two hours south. “So, what amenities are available here in northern New Mexico?”

Supporting local businesses is a unique aspect of our community. Many of us happily make our way over to nearby mom-and-pop shops to say hello or purchase our favorite things! Although occasionally we may find ourselves comparing prices with online retailers or larger chains. While franchise chains dominate much of the country, northern New Mexico remains a stronghold for local businesses and it is easy to be proud of that. Living here, you’ll find a refreshing number of local restaurants and businesses that serve as pillars of our community and deserve our support. For some, proximity to conveniences is non-negotiable, while others have adapted by maximizing online shopping options or making monthly trips to Santa Fe for retail therapy.

I will say the demand for affordable housing and access to well-paying jobs are challenges, particularly in rural areas. Remote work, entrepreneurship, or self-sustenance through homesteading are common solutions. Many of us

Norteños are accustomed to planning our morning commutes with an eye on weather and a careful eye out for wildlife. It’s easy to decide what you are willing to settle for, whether it’s a scenic drive through the mountains or navigating bumper to bumper traffic, residents prioritize their lifestyle preferences. Those relocating from busy cities may find the slower pace of life refreshing, while others may struggle to adjust. Overall, residents tend to adopt a more laid-back attitude and derive joy from nature and community. Our love for sunrises, sunsets, and mountains defines our northern New Mexico experience.

What keeps you rooted here? Is it the diverse multicultural community, the exciting arts scene, outdoor recreational opportunities, or perhaps it’s your grandma who lives just down the road? Regardless of the reasons, living in northern New Mexico offers a unique blend of culture, scenery, and community. What sells you on living in northern New Mexico?

Music Lineup At Questa Farmers Market, Opening May 26

By GAEA MCGAHEE,
QUESTA FARMERS MARKET
PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Come enjoy live music at Questa Farmers Market with Michael Rael & Friends on opening day, May 26.

We love every bit of the local food, youth intern energy and entrepreneurial spirit, but what connects all of us, rain or shine, is the music! Local musicians, you bring hearts together, make us dance, and keep good vibes flowing.

Every market is a celebration; here's the music lineup for the season!

May 26 Michael Rael & Friends

June 2 The Arcane Ramblers

June 6 Nick Hans

June 16 Nick Hans & the High Desert Serenaders

June 23 Phillip John Brooks

June 30 Sanji Band

July 7 Noble Rider

July 14 Owen Robert Johnson

July 21 Marlo Mortenson

July 28 Chris & Rodney Arellano

Aug 4 Alex Garcia, At The Watertower

Aug 11 Chris & Rodney Arellano

Aug 18 Mark Dudrow & Martha Shepp

Aug 25 Kate Mann

Sept 1 Becky Reardon & Julie Hawley

Sept 8 Mark Dudrow & Justin Dean

Sept 15 Chris & Rodney Arellano

Sept 22 (to be announced)

Sept 29 Wilson & McKee from La Veta

Oct 6 Cambalache, Michael Rael & Friends & Everyone

We're happy to host music every Sunday and we're honored to have each musician and group join all of us this



Photo by G. McGahee

QFM Inters 2023 running their coffee booth and making pizza in the horno.

season. Support local musicians; buy their merch, dance, enjoy, and, as Michael Rael says, song requests on a one hundred dollar bill.

The market will be open every Sunday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. until early October. Thanks to local growers, entrepreneurs, customers and community—this will be the eighth season!

“Hola this is Michael Rael, one of the music entertainers in the local area for over 50 years. I really enjoy playing at the farmers market, especially with my grandson, The Deeds, Irene Martinez, Jimmy Baca, Dino Archuleta, Mark Boor and Bubba Beschler who comes to us from Pennsylvania. We're at Rael's Market almost every Thursday night and so anybody that wants to join us, come

in and have a fun night. I so enjoy doing that... and then we're gonna be able to show off at the farmers market. Come by and enjoy all the different musicians that will come through the farmers market!”

Paid Youth Internship

We will hire eight Paid Youth Interns this season. Our program offers work-based learning, mentorship and skill development focused on the local farm and market economic system. Interns are able to work on a variety of projects each season, which include set activities and additional opportunities tailored by the student to fit their interests. The intended age group is 14 to 18, however younger people may apply. We begin hiring this month! The application is open on our website, [\[ersMarket.org\]\(http://ersMarket.org\).](http://QuestaFarm-</p>
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Call to Food and Farm Vendors

More than ever, growing local food is up to all of us. To be a farmers market, eligible to accept EBT/SNAP and Double-Up-Food-Bucks, at least 50 percent of what we sell must be raw farm goods or unprocessed local foods (fruits, vegetables, honey, eggs, meat, and cheese). Local means grown within 100 miles of the market. Vendors may sell local prepared foods (SNAP-eligible) and value-added farm goods, with a small percentage of handmade items.

If you have SNAP benefits, you receive Double-Up-Food-Bucks (DUF) automatically when you use your EBT card at the market. You'll swipe your EBT card for \$20 and you'll get another \$20 to spend on local fruits and vegetables, doubling your money (this DUF portion is a federal grant).

Interested in being a vendor?

Please get in touch with Market Manager Susannah Hall. To contact us, call (575) 224-2102 or email growers-makers@gmail.com. You can find details on our website, questafarmersmarket.org/for-vendors/

The Questa Farmers Market is a program of Localogy, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) in Questa. Our mission is to support small farm, garden- and food-based businesses in northern Taos County, and youth through market internships and mentorship.

QuestaFarmersMarket.org

facebook.com/QuestaFarmersMarket
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QFM Program Director, Gaea McGahee

Taos County Lodger's Tax Grant Program Seeking Applicants Closes On May 15

By STAFF WRITERS

The Taos County department of economic development and the Taos County lodgers' tax advisory board are encouraging Taos County-based organizations and businesses to submit applications for lodger's tax grants that support advertising, publicizing, or promoting tourist-related attractions, facilities, and events within Taos County.

The date for making applications opened on Monday, April 22 and will close on Wednesday, May 15.

Funding is available to any type of entity (non-profit or for-profit) that promotes

travel and tourism for the benefit of Taos County. Proposals must align with the mission, vision, and goals of the program, and comply with all applicable conditions.

Applicants' entities must have a Federal EIN and a New Mexico CRS number. If an entity does not have a Federal EIN and/or NM CRS Number, it must be fiscally sponsored by a fully incorporated entity. Applicants must make a clear case in the application as to how their proposed activities meet the goals outlined in the Taos County lodger's tax grant program guidelines.

Grants are awarded on a reimburse-

ment-basis only.

Eligible applicants are invited to apply online only, and should review the complete guidelines and FAQs prior to submitting an application. Complete details regarding the program can be found at: <https://www.taoscounty.org/478/Lodgers-Tax-Grant-Program>.

If you would like additional information, contact Economic Development Director Jessica Stern, at (575) 737-6346 or jessica.stern@taoscountynm.gov



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A New Day in Red River for Memorial Day Weekend

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Another Memorial Day weekend celebration will occur in our mountain communities this month—but it will look different than previous years. In response to last year's tragedy in Red River, the Town has worked to rebrand its Memorial Day Motorcycle Rally to a more family-friendly event called "Mayfest in the Mountains."

During Red River's Memorial Day Motorcycle Rally event last year, a violent conflict broke out between two rival motorcycle gangs on the east end of Main Street, which resulted in three deaths. The Town is taking precautions to make sure that kind of violence does not happen again.

Read more about last year's tragedy here:

<https://questanews.com/biker-gang-violence-overtakes-41st-annual-memorial-day-biker-rally/>

The most obvious difference this year will be that vendor tents that usually lined Main Street will not be allowed. Individuals will still be able to sell motorcycle-themed merchandise on private property but there will be no temporary permits issued to out-of-town vendors along Main Street. There will instead be plenty of local vendors and artisans.

"We're going to have extra law enforcement officials in place from the Town, Taos County, and New Mexico State Police, basically following what we've been doing for the past 42 years," Mayor Linda Calhoun told the *Questa del Rio News*.

"Safety is our number one priority," said the Mayor. Mayor Calhoun also wants to remind the community—for the 42 years of Memorial Day events held in Red River—there was only one tragedy. "The community is doing what it can to increase safety measures, but that should not stop us from participating and enjoying the event."

"All we can do is prepare ourselves," said Mayor Calhoun. "Prepare and hope for the best."

The Mayfest in the Mountains event is scheduled for May 25, 26, and 27, and will house limited vendors in Brandenburg Park in front of the Red River Conference Center. The vendors on public property will not be flying any motorcycle-themed clothing or flair.

The event will span multiple venues throughout town, including the Red River Conference Center, Brandenburg



Courtesy Photo

The scene on the street after the shooting, Red River NM, May 31, 2023



Photo by E. Wilde

Food vendors in Brandenburg Park in front of the Red River Conference Center in spring 2023

Park, Mallette Park, Town Ponds and more. Dedicated buses will transport visitors along the circuit between parks.

While the Town of Red River remains optimistic, local establishments are not sold with the changes. *Questa's Stop 'n' Go* at the main intersection, on Highway 522, is still planning on hosting bikers. Owner Berna Trujillo is skeptical about how effective the Red River rebranding will be to deter the influx of bikers who are sure to arrive that weekend.

"I hope it works out for the best, but the bikers will be welcome here," Trujillo told the *Questa del Rio News* referring to the family-friendly rebrand.

Most notably, the Motherlode Saloon in Red River has shared that they are also planning to host bikers for a celebration

coined "Revive the Ride." The post goes on to say there will be live bands, bike show contests, and a memorial ride. The social media post says "while we will be hosting all of our usual great times, we are moving to a no-colors policy this year. Please plan accordingly and plan to have an awesome weekend with us!"

Mayfest in the Mountains promises a family-friendly experience with a focus on community engagement and cultural celebration, bikers are still welcomed.

Mayor Linda Calhoun expresses her enthusiasm for this groundbreaking event, stating, "Mayfest in the Mountains embodies the spirit of our community, fostering a sense of togetherness and honoring those who have made lasting contributions to our country. This

Memorial Day weekend will be filled with family-friendly festivities, outdoor recreation, and artistic expression, providing an unforgettable experience for everyone."

Scheduled Activities:

- Wall of Honor Display at the Red River Conference Center: Join us in paying tribute to local figures who have left an indelible mark on our nation. The Red River Conference Center will feature a Wall of Honor as a testament to their enduring legacies.
- Quick-Draw Painting Event and Exhibit: Immerse yourself in the town's artistic beauty through the eyes of local artists. The resulting artworks will be showcased in a reception and exhibit at a local venue, with live music, awards, and food, from 4 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, May 26. (See QCC article, page 16).
- Outdoor Recreation Workshops: Engage in various workshops, including fly-fishing, skateboarding, disc-golfing, climbing, mountain biking, kite flying, and more.
- Family-Friendly Games and Activities: Share laughter and create lasting memories through family-friendly games and activities held across different town locations. Don't miss the chance to interact with adorable alpacas, adding a unique touch to the festivities.
- NM Game & Fish Department Exhibit: Explore the wonders of nature with the New Mexico Game & Fish Department's exhibit, featuring the Trophy Trailer. Participate in pellet rifle training on May 25 and 26 for an immersive experience.
- Live Music: Delight in the melodies of live music performances by local talents, contributing to the festive atmosphere.
- Note: Not all activities will take place every day, and they are weather-dependent.
- In addition, discover the art of hot air ballooning in New Mexico presented by the Anderson-Abruzzo International Hot Air Ballooning Foundation. Detailed schedules of events will be released later, offering a comprehensive overview of the exciting activities planned for this Memorial Day weekend. Join us for an unforgettable experience honoring veterans and celebrating the beauty of the mountains.

8750' BBQ & Music Festival Lineup Announced

By STAFF WRITERS

Red River's highly anticipated 8750' BBQ & Music Festival (pronounced eighty-seven-fifty) is set to take place from August 15 to August 18, 2024. According to a press release sent by the Town of Red River, the four-day extravaganza is expected to be an unforgettable experience for all attendees, combining mouth-watering BBQ and chili with thrilling live music in the Red River Valley. The event is co-hosted by Red River Events Inc. and the Town of Red River.

The festival kicks off with a dinner and lakeside concert at the Bitter Creek Ranch, located at 8 Bitter Creek Road. Guests will experience all the flavors of expertly prepared BBQ while enjoying beautiful melodies from John Fullbright and Bailey Bigger.

Attendees can also look forward to daytime musical performances at the town's Brandenburg Park and evening performances at the historic Motherlode Saloon.

Highlights of the 2024 lineup include Ray Wylie Hubbard, Dale Watson, Uncle



Courtesy Photo

Lucius, Seth James, Jesse Daniel, Josh Weathers, along with many more local and national favorites. The festival wraps with a show presented in partnership with Red River Ski and Summer Area: ride the scenic chairlift on Sunday

morning for an unforgettable concert experience at The Tip Bar and Grill, the restaurant located at the top of Red River ski area.

The festival will feature exciting competitions: for BBQ, red chili and green

chili, which will showcase the skills of talented cooks from across the southwest. These culinary masters will compete for coveted prizes, cash rewards, and the ultimate bragging rights.

In 2023, the festival was recognized by the Senate of the State of New Mexico as an official State BBQ Championship, sanctioned by the Lone Star BBQ Society. The red chili cookoff is sanctioned by Chili Appreciation Society International and is the Four Corners Regional auto-qualifier.

Attendees will also get to cast their votes on Saturday for the People's Choice competition. The proceeds from the cookoff go to support the Red River Valley Charter School.

With its fusion of delicious food, live music, and breathtaking scenery, the 8750' BBQ & Music Festival promises an unforgettable experience for attendees of all ages.

For more information about the festival, its performer, to purchase tickets, and admission details, you can visit the official website at www.8750festival.com.

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Water Is Life. Let's Work Together To Protect It

OPINION EDITORIAL:

By LYNN SKALL
DIRECTOR, QUESTA ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT FUND

This Op Ed references the article written and published in the Taos News on Thursday, April 25. The Questa del Rio News obtained permission to re-run the original story to avoid any potential conflict of interest as the Questa Economic Development Fund provides partial funding for the Questa del Rio News. You can read the Taos News coverage on page 9.

The Questa Economic Development Fund has been acting as a convenor since April 2023 to bring together the 15 acequia groups in the Questa area to explore a proposed "Area-Wide Acequia Association."

The key objective of establishing the regional association, as described in the informational one-pager distributed throughout the community over the past year, is to "Protect and preserve local water rights, and the culture and acequia heritage for all parciantes' ownership, and the health of the land." (See all benefits for the regional association at [QuestaNews.com](https://www.quesitanews.com).)

At the 7th area-wide acequia association public meeting, held in January 2024, the acequias agreed to go back to their parciantes and let them decide about the regional association, as well as to choose if they would appoint a representative to a steering committee being formed in May to determine the possible development and direction of the regional organization.

It was communicated that Judy Torres, the director of the Taos Valley Acequia Association, who QEDF hired to function as a consultant on the project, would facilitate the Steering Committee without involvement, input, or influence from QEDF — nor Chevron.

Before the first steering committee meeting could be held, a separate effort, organized by Juan Montes and the Cabresto Lake Irrigation Community Ditch Association, held an "informational" meeting on April 18 to create their own steering committee, unbeknownst to the QEDF and Torres.

The meeting at the Questa VFW began with a 30-minute skit presented by the NM Acequia Association that slated "The Queen of the Acequias" against "Evil Oil and Gas" who is trying to "buy up all our water rights." After setting this tone, it was clear that the meeting was more about "don't take money from oil and gas - let's get Chevron out of our area water issues,"



Courtesy Photo

rather than "how can we work together to protect our water?"

While Chevron has accepted full financial responsibility — to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars over many decades — to clean up the mine that "contaminated" the area for more than 75 years before they purchased it, they are also offering \$160,000 over three years to help the 15 acequias form a regional association to help protect their water rights.

Why do these have to be mutually exclusive?

Before the mine closed in 2014, Chevron created the non-profit QEDF "to support the transition of Questa and the surrounding community to a diversified, sustainable post-mining economy." Since then, Chevron has invested millions into the community through the QEDF in support of hundreds of projects.

In fact, Chevron has been one of the strongest advocates for water issues in our area for over the past decade.

Chevron funding created the award-winning Eagle Rock Lake Park; they have restored the Red River which flourishes; Chevron built a state-of-the-art water treatment plant that processes over a million gallons of water every day to prevent additional water contamination during mine clean-up, and into perpetuity.

Chevron recently donated \$140,000 to the Village of Questa to have the engineering completed for a new municipal well. Chevron is in negotiations with the Office of the State Engineer to retain historic water rights they feel they are legally entitled to — water rights they want to donate to the Village of Questa and make available to the community, instead of losing them permanently to the state.

Chevron representatives have explicitly stated that "there are no strings attached" to the \$160,000. "Chevron places no conditions on the establishment of the regional association and will not have a role in its governance structure or operations — the

disbursement of the next \$50,000 will go directly to the newly created organization, who will decide how those funds are used."

Just as Chevron is not providing any direction to the Village on where or how deep the new well should be, Chevron will not be involved in the development, operations, or decisions of the regional acequia association.

Juan Montes states that the "QEDF should not be organizing an area wide acequia association as a front group for Chevron."

QEDF says, instead of encouraging divisiveness and buying into unsubstantiated threats, the acequias should come together, form a single steering committee, determine the viability of a regional acequia association, and decide how they can best serve their parciantes, protect their land and water rights, with or without Chevron and its funding.

Water is life. Let's work together to protect it while we still have it to protect.

Taos County Ditches Debate Chevron Dollars

By GEOFFREY PLANT,
TAOS NEWS
(reprinted with permission)

Fifteen northern Taos County acequias are talking about forming a regional ditch association, but one source of startup funds — oil and gas giant Chevron — is proving divisive.

The association would be similar in function to the Taos Valley Acequia Association, which represents and supports 54 irrigation ditch systems in the Taos Valley.

Concerns about Chevron's involvement led Juan Montes, Danny Garcia and several other area acequia officials to begin organizing the same ditches into a non-Chevron funded group last fall. The dual efforts led to some confusion and tension at a meeting of area mayordomos and ditch commissioners at the Questa VFW last Thursday (April 18). The meeting was sponsored by the Cabresto Lake Irrigation Community Ditch Association and the New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA).

The first organizing effort was launched by the Questa Economic Development Fund (QEDF), through which Chevron Mining, Inc. — a Chevron subsidiary that owns the shuttered Questa molybdenum mine and federal Superfund site — directs money to support economic development and community projects in the former mining community. The fund has facilitated seven public meetings since February of last year.

The second organizing effort is distinguished by a reluctance to accept money from Chevron, which is viewed with suspicion by some in the local community.

The company reported nearly \$197 billion in sales and other operating revenues last year. For the 36th consecutive year, the oil and gas giant increased payouts to shareholders with a record total of \$26.3 billion in cash returned.

Extractive industries like oil and gas consume a tremendous amount of water.

"We met the first time on this committee thing; Judy Torres [executive director of the Taos Valley Acequia Association] brought it, and [Lynn Skall, executive director of the Questa Economic Development Fund]," Ricky Leon of Cerro told the Taos News after the meeting. "The first thing they did is they had a representative of the mine, and the mine turns around and says, 'We can help you map your water.' What does that trigger to you? Real estate."

"We just seem suspicious — like what's

the agenda, really?" Leon's wife Rachel added. "And I do agree they're always fighting [acequias] at the legislature."

Chevron has donated \$160,000 for the QEDF to spend on startup costs for a regional association, but the Leons were among several people who asserted that Chevron's oil and gas interests conflict with the interests of acequias.

Chevron denies any ulterior motive.

"Chevron Mining, Inc. has no plans to acquire any more water rights than it currently owns," a spokesperson told the Taos News in an email, adding that the company "has committed funding to the QEDF for the establishment of the organization in support of QEDF's goal of keeping water rights local and promoting local sustainable agriculture."

Paula Garcia, executive director of the NMAA, which represents 700 ditches statewide, said it would be a mistake to accept funding from extractive industries.

"At NMAA, we do not take money from oil and gas companies because of the obvious conflict of interest," Garcia said. "We've been offered money from oil and gas companies, and we've never taken it. And the reason is that oil and gas companies always oppose us at the state legislature.

"I'm not singling out any company," she added, "that's just what they do. Because what are we trying to do? Keep water in the acequias; keep water in agriculture [and] fight for clean water."

Garcia said the NMAA could help identify as much as \$10,000 in grant funding for a regional acequia association. She emphasized that — with the exception of the Taos Valley Acequia Association, which has one full time paid staff position — the two dozen-plus regional associations across the state are volunteer-run.

Garcia said the area around Questa once had the first regional association in the state.

Under Spanish and Mexican control, irrigators in New Mexico shared water under common law, Garcia explained, but in 1907, under U.S. territorial law, "water rights became more like a property attached to your land. Because of the way laws changed with statehood, it became necessary to figure out who owns what and how much."

In northern Taos County — from San Cristobal northward — Garcia said, the regional association defended acequeros' water rights until a final court decree was issued in the early 2000s, after which the regional association slowly dissolved.



Courtesy Photo from Taos News

Locals attend meeting at the Questa VFW

"So it served its purpose," she said. "You got a decree, and then it wasn't active anymore."

But, she added, reforming a regional association now would have its advantages, including participation in the annual meeting of all New Mexico acequias, and an enhanced ability to collectively defend against transfers of acequia water rights, the loss of water rights, and other issues that negatively impact ditch systems and parcientes.

Juan Montes, a ditch commissioner and community organizer, asked meeting attendees: "Do you want the New Mexico Acequia Association representing us, or Chevron?"

"He who pays the piper calls the tunes," Montes said. "We're talking to Lynn, and maybe they'll concede that they're not the ones to run a region-wide acequia association."

Skall introduced herself at the start of the meeting as being with the Questa del Rio News, but was drawn into tense discussions in her role as executive director of the Chevron-funded Questa Economic Development Fund. She said that although some acequias had already nominated a representative to join the

QEDF-sponsored steering committee, she would be equally pleased to see a regional water association formed without QEDF involvement or Chevron funding.

"What you're saying is exactly what we were planning to do," Skall said. "I have a list of people who volunteered to be on the steering committee. I'm happy to bring that to this group, to Juan. As all of you said, it's about protecting the water, keeping the water here and advocating for it."

Montes said he personally thinks the Chevron donation is inappropriate. But if a majority of acequia members voted to accept it, he'd go along with it. He just doesn't think the QEDF should be involved.

Instead of leading the charge to form a regional acequia association, Montes told the Taos News the QEDF should use the Chevron donation to support acequia programs that engage young people and educate them, like paying "interns to learn how to be mayordomos, or learn to farm."

"That's the Questa Economic Development Fund's forté, and maybe that's what they should dedicate themselves to — not creating a front group for Chevron," Montes said.

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Liz Vialpando-Poe

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Being raised in a community where your history connects to every part of your present, it is difficult to find the courage to leave. It is similarly difficult to forge a path and stay.

Questa del Rio News is committed to highlighting different members of our community, both those who have created their paths and planted their own roots in the community that raised them, and those who have pursued lives outside of the community – through our Representando series. This series is dedicated to those who are Representando communities in northern Taos County, in various facets of life.

For our May issue, we interviewed Liz Vialpando-Poe. Raised in Questa, Vialpando-Poe graduated from Questa High School in 1999. She knew early on that she wanted to be in the military, so she enlisted between her junior and senior year. Upon graduation, she left for basic training in Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Early in her military career, she was a human resources specialist and was assigned to the 6-52 Air Defense Artillery in Ansbach, Germany, to assist in the ongoing conflict stemming from the Prizren incident, a confrontation in 1999 between German Kosovo Force troops advancing into Kosovo and stragglers from the withdrawing Yugoslav Army.

9/11 eventually changed the tide for operations across the military. “On the day it happened, we were nine hours ahead in Germany, and were finishing the day. I heard on the radio that something happened in America. It was hard to understand in German so I sent an instant-message to my sister, and she told me what happened. Everything came to a halt. Formation was canceled, the base was shut down... I just remember everyone rushing to turn on TVs so we could see what was happening.”

Soon after 9/11, her unit was de-



Courtesy Photo

Liz Vialpando-Poe and her family pose for a photo while on vacation

ployed to Afghanistan, where she assisted in managing deployment for over 750 soldiers. Vialpando-Poe ensured soldiers went through medical checks, had proper ID, and next-of-kin documentation. Following that, she was transferred into a military intelligence unit in Arizona where she managed training courses for several different military operational specialties, and helped soldiers just finishing basic training.

While in Arizona, Vialpando-Poe gave birth to a daughter and found herself navigating the military as a single mom. A year later, she met her husband, Daniel, a fellow New Mexican. She then received orders to go to Korea, however, family could not go with her, so she turned down the orders and began to transition out of the military in 2007, after eight years of service.

Transitioning out of the military took some figuring out, as there weren't many transitional services available to assist service members at that time. Vialpando-Poe started working as a government contractor and decided to move back to New Mexico where she had her second daughter, and got married.

In New Mexico, she started working with the department of energy as a contractor and later moved on to be a federal employee, for ten years. Her government career initially started in public affairs, then transitioned into personnel

security. Ultimately, Vialpando-Poe decided to move back to government contracting, working for a company based in Grand Junction, Colorado. She started with them as a program manager of a nuclear weapons contract and worked her way up to chief of operations in five years, managing over \$20 million in revenue through approximately 50 government contracts.

Vialpando-Poe recalls being asked about her 5-year plan during a check-in with her boss. “I was hesitant to tell him at first, but I said I wanted to own my own business. I had started researching in 2008, but realized I couldn't quit my steady job, so I decided to keep patiently waiting for it to make sense. Telling my boss this, however, opened doors, as he knew people who had established businesses and were interested in selling.”

Meeting with one of the companies, she recalls it was a perfect fit. “I knew they were the ones I wanted to proceed with.” In June 2022, she started working with Citrine LLC to negotiate a deal. In June 2023, she bought 51 percent of them and became the majority owner. Citrine is a company founded in 2015 that specializes in engineering design, construction management, and commissioning services.

Vialpando-Poe is the CEO and just in the last year has seen a significant growth of the company. With an impres-



Courtesy Photo

Liz Vialpando-Poe

sive 150 percent growth in employees and over 250 percent growth in revenue in the last 18 months, she has big plans for the company. Her company has obtained a service-disabled veteran-owned certificate; small, disadvantaged business certificate; hubzone certificate and is awaiting a minority woman-owned certificate. Additionally, her company employs individuals regionally across six states, with two home offices in Lakewood and Grand Junction, Colorado. She plans on opening a third office in New Mexico in the near future as well.

Vialpando-Poe works out of her Rio Rancho home, traveling to the company's home offices in Colorado regularly. Her company was the recipient of the 2023 “companies to watch” award by the Colorado office of economic develop-

LIZ VIALPANDO-POE cont'd on page 7



Destinee Vigil Martinez

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Destinee Vigil Martinez was nominated for May's Outstanding Youth Report. Vigil Martinez is a senior at Questa High School and will be graduating in May. She plans to attend college in Taos where she is planning to study to become a paramedic.

Destinee's grandma says that the family moved to Questa from Colorado Springs 15 years ago as they didn't want to raise Destinee and her brother around gangs and drugs in the big city. She says she is so proud of her grandkids because they have learned and achieved.

Vigil Martinez is a volunteer firefighter with Questa Fire and EMS and has been doing volunteering for a

year-and-a-half. She attends bi-weekly trainings and works to learn the ropes of firefighting while staying safe and prepared.

She says she has gone on a few fire calls and it's an adrenaline rush. When asked why she does it, she underscores the importance of helping the community when they need it. She says the shortage of volunteers was a big driving force in her interest in getting involved.

In addition to training and responding to calls, Vigil Martinez also works to help the department with regular fundraising.

Upon graduation, she says she plans to remain with the Questa Fire and EMS while she attends school in Taos.



Courtesy Photo

Destinee Vigil Martinez

LIZ VIALPANDO-POE cont'd from page 6

ment. Vialpando-Poe is committed to creating a healthy and inclusive environment for her staff. "We've had great employee retention and it's because we meet our employees' needs, providing flexibility, good benefits, and supportive experiences."

A new recruitment effort for Citrine is focused on hiring veterans. The company partners with Skillbridge and Hiring our Heroes, government programs that help companies to pay service members who are transitioning out of the military for two months while they get trained and primed to take on new civilian roles. "The path for me wasn't clear after military life. I had to figure it out, so being able to partner on this initiative to help provide more jobs to veterans is such a great way we can be a part of the solution," she says.

When asked what advice she would give others wanting to pursue a big dream, she says, "Don't hold back when people are asking you what your

plan or your passions are. "I knew I wanted to be a business owner, but I was modest and didn't know if I should state that up front. I decided to embrace it and now I am the CEO of a business. Don't be afraid to have big plans and to pursue them. Living your truth will open doors for your future."

When asked if Questa has played any role in her life and success, she says "I knew I wanted to be able to leave and prove to myself and others that I could succeed. I knew I could do something big; I just didn't know what. Questa gave me the motivation and drive to join the military and open my horizons, which ultimately led me to where I am today."

Today, Liz resides in Rio Rancho, NM with her husband of 18 years. Their three daughters all live and work in NM as well, Alex, 25, works for a local government contractor at the Los Alamos Labs, Mikayla, 22, works for a local government contractor and is finishing her Bachelors degree at UNM, and Nevaeh, 18, works as an early education teaching assistant at a local Montessori school.

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Questa Wildcat Cheer Brings Home Second In State!



Courtesy Photo

The Questa Cheer squad poses for a photo after the NMAA cheer competition

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The two-time state champion Wildcat cheerleaders placed second at the A2A NMAA State Competition on Saturday, April 6. They are coached by head coach Maria Medina and assistant coach Angel Medina. The Questa Cheer team has brought home a cumulative four championships over the past decade. This year, the first-place team in A2A were the Maxwell Bears and the Clayton Yellowjackets were the third-place team.

Through the 2024 competition year, the Questa Wildcat Cheer team routinely came in first place at regional competitions, including the 'SPX Showcase' in late March where they placed first in both in Game Day Performance and Cheer with Music performance. The team participated in the 'Royal Ram Throwdown' in early March, also placing first in both Game Day Performance and Cheer with Music. Additionally, in January, the team hosted a 'Pride of the Q' Cheer Competition in Questa, where the Wildcats garnered first place in A3A



Courtesy Photo

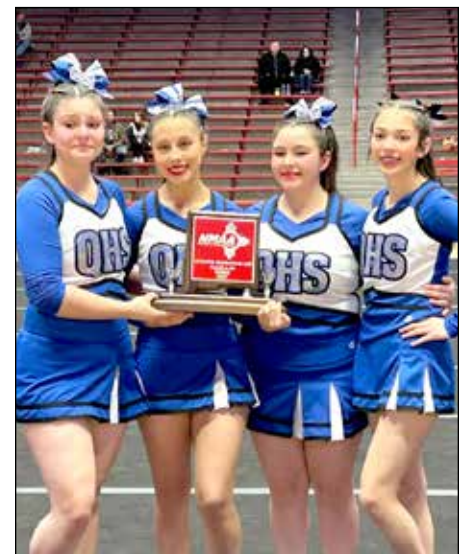
Questa Cheer team poses together following the National Honor Society ceremony

for their game day routine.

While second place in the state competition was not what the team was aiming for, head coach Maria Medina says they are incredibly proud of the team's accomplishment. In an interview with *Questa del Rio News*, Medina says this set back is priming the team for their comeback. When asked how the team felt about placing second, she says, "they're hungry. They know what they're capable of and this has only made us

determined and dedicated to bringing home first next year." Medina says this is a young team ranging from 8th grade to juniors. "All of our members are planning to stay on with the squad and Angel and I are hopeful to return as coaches next year as well. We are already eager to get going."

The team is also more than just capable of dominating the cheer scene. Twelve of the 21-member squad are also members of the National Honor Society,

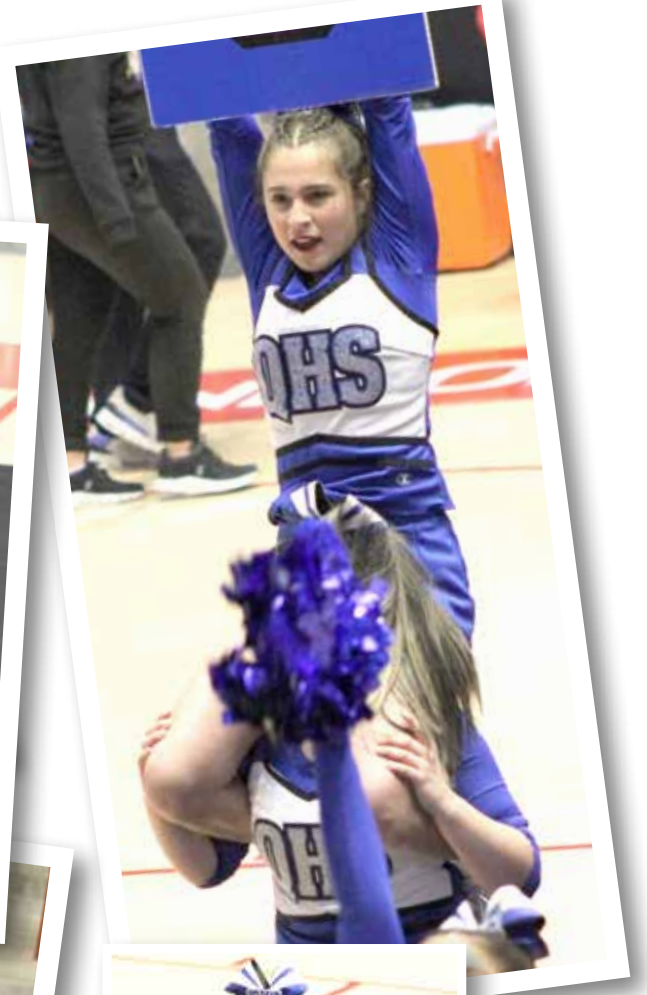


Courtesy Photo

Team Captains Aaliyah Piper, Ariana Medina, Joshlyn Medina and Janae Dominguez pose with the 2nd place trophy

and were honored for their membership the week after the state competition, at a school ceremony on Sunday, April 14.

Congratulations to our Questa Wildcat Cheer team on an impressive season!



Courtesy Photos



*Congratulations
Wildcat Cheer
Team!*



Recognition for Years of Service: Teacher Diane León

By STAFF WRITERS

How many years have you been teaching?

I will be completing my 18th year of teaching this year. All my time has been spent in the Questa Independent School District. Over the years, I have taught Spanish for grades 7 through 12, as well as dual-credit Spanish III, introduction to Chicano studies, and career explorations/academic foundations through the University of New Mexico-Taos here at Questa High School. A couple of years I also taught English language development. Additionally, I have served as the district bilingual and title III coordinator since 2014 where I oversee the bilingual Spanish heritage program in grades Kindergarten through 10, as well as serving English language learners in our schools. For a few months I was the interim district principal, in the spring of 2021.

Why did you decide to become a teacher?

Honestly, becoming a teacher was never really a thought in my mind. As graduation and college approached, I was leaning toward becoming a school counselor. But as I thought more about it, the school counselors I had growing up seemed to spend more time on schedules, grades, testing, and paperwork than they did engaging with students, and it didn't seem like I could make much of a difference in helping people that way. So I asked myself, "Where can I serve young people best in our community of Questa?" And the only thing that stood out to me was in the classroom. Then I decided that I could potentially make the most impact on my community by teaching Spanish, which was a language that was already struggling to survive. My hope was that if young people in Questa saw my passion at a young age for our language and culture, that maybe, just maybe, I could not only make a difference in students' lives but also help to preserve our heritage.

Why did you decide to return to Questa to teach?

Questa has always had my heart and of course my family has always been very tight-knit. I am always joking about how my roots are deeper than those of chamisos (we all know how deep those can go and how hard they are to dig up.) I honestly find it very difficult to ever picture myself anywhere else. It was nev-



Courtesy Photo

er a hope or a plan to move away from here, and quite frankly I never really left. The entire time I attended the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque I spent two or three weekends there. I came home every weekend and created my schedule so that I started a little later on Monday mornings and was out early on Thursdays or Fridays in order to make the drive home. I even convinced my professors at UNM in my last semester of student teaching to allow me to get my experience here so that I [could] get my foot in the door and be prepared for a job to open at Questa High School. Honestly, I feel like this little village had already provided me with so much in life and made me the person that I am, so it was now my turn to give back.

What's the most difficult part about teaching?

There are a couple of difficult aspects of teaching for me. One of those being how much time I spend working outside of school hours to lesson-plan, grade, answer emails, further my education, complete trainings, professional development, keeping up with the newest changes, trends and the like. It is not a job that I can just walk away from at the end of the day and forget about. I know that I owe it to my students to be prepared and give feedback in a timely manner to help them improve. Often spending so much time working at

home can cut in to family and free time (which I am trying to be better about). But more difficult than the extra work is seeing students struggle physically or emotionally and sometimes I get the overwhelming feeling that I'm not doing enough for them. It is hard not to worry and think about how I can help improve their lives or situations outside of the classroom.

What is the best thing about teaching?

The best thing about teaching is seeing students grow, mature, follow their dreams, and become adults. Seeing success stories day after day makes me smile! Teaching is truly a calling, and I don't think anyone does it for prestige or money. The reward of teaching is the feeling of fulfillment I get when seeing students do amazing things in their lives, creating families of their own, and making a difference. I LOVE getting messages of gratitude, sometimes apologies for not working harder or behaving better, and even tags on social media from students. Those sentiments of gratitude make teaching worth it. I have been told for many years that I can't save the world, but in my heart if I can be a positive influence on any one of their worlds, I've done my job and am content with that!

You teach and are a volleyball coach and a class sponsor. Why do you choose to give of your time to these additional duties?

Well, truth be told, on several different occasions and years of coaching, the job found me. I didn't put in or apply, but the program or another coach needed help. I could not bear to see a program that I'm passionate about going without. So, I stepped in and did what I could. Some years have been better than others, but the successes, failures, overcoming challenges, motivation, work ethic and friendships I made have all been worth it. We have some very talented and hardworking athletes that continue to teach me things every day. When it comes to sponsoring, it's a lot of work and nobody really wants to do it, but it must be done. Fundraising, planning events, homecoming prep, floats, proms, graduations, and trips are all fun, but require a lot of work, responsibility, organization and planning. As a student they are always some of the most memorable, so it's important to give of yourself and your time to make them memorable

for future generations as well. Another rewarding aspect of sponsorship is the bond that is often created with the classes you work with, since so many more memories are shared both in and out of the classroom.

What would you tell other people who might be considering returning to work and live in Questa?

Follow your heart and do what makes you happy but always know that your little hometown village of Questa will be here waiting for you and embracing your willingness to give back to your family and community. Raising a family in a community like ours can be one of the most fulfilling things in life, teaching your children about work ethic, the beauty that surrounds us, old ways of sustainable living, hunting, fishing, growing, gathering, and living off the land are resources that cannot be replaced or taken away. Even though some people may fall into the small-town politics and so called mitote, the vast majority of gente want to see you succeed and continue to live a life filled with happiness, cultura, tradiciones, and familia. Remember: this life is what we make of it, what we are willing to put in we will get out, and sometimes living a simple lifestyle learning to work hard for what you have, overcoming adversity and challenges are what makes us stronger. Always know that regardless of where you end up, we are proud of you, just don't forget where you came from as well as those who have helped shape who you are today.

Anything else you want to add?

I want to thank my gente from the bottom of my heart for all their support and love throughout the years. My parents Clyde and Ruby Cisneros and husband Ricardo León played a huge role in my successes and abilities to work full-time, attend graduate school at night, coach, teach, sponsor, and be involved in community organizations and events. Without them I most definitely wouldn't be where I am today. I also want to thank mis hijos Alyana and Ricardo León Jr. for their patience, understanding, support, and love in sharing their momma with all these other kids their entire lives. To all my students both past and present "Always remember you're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, smarter than you think, and LOVED more than you will ever know."

Senior Navigates Serious Health Conditions and Defies All Odds



Courtesy Photo

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Questa High School senior Faith Cisneros was recently named Prom Princess by her peers. Meeting Faith is knowing kindness, as she meets everyone with a sweet smile and generous heart. Little do many know she has fought battles others could never fathom.

Jessica Cisneros, Faith's mother, was told at 28 weeks pregnant that the doctors had detected a rhabdomyoma tumor growing on her baby's heart. As Isaac and Jessica learned more about Faith's condition, they quickly realized regular doctor visits and intensive treatment would be in their future.

Faith was diagnosed with Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC). The condition causes tumors to grow in various areas of the body including the heart, head, lungs and kidneys. At the time of Faith's diagnosis, little was known about the condition and doctors gave her family a grim prognosis. Isaac and Jessica continued pressing forward, looking for answers and treatment for Faith.

Eventually, the family was accepted into a program in Denver through Children's Hospital. Over the past several years, Faith has had several tumors removed. Faith has a tumor in her brain which is inoperable therefore is required to take daily chemotherapy in pill form to manage its growth and size. Thankfully, her mother says the tumor is stable and is not growing.

Additionally, when Faith was 11, she experienced a tonic-clonic seizure and was airlifted to Denver Children's Hospital. Later, it was discovered that Faith was diagnosed with epilepsy and currently manages it through medication.

At just 18 years old, Faith is required to take 12 pills daily. "She doesn't complain. She just knows this is what she has to do to survive," Jessica says.

Her name is a fitting reminder for the family to leave everything in God's hands, her mother says. "As parents, the unknown is your biggest fear. We had to leave it in God's hands knowing she will get through this." Ever since she was small, Faith was special. "She gives off an aura and my grandma used to say she's a healer. I know that she's certainly a fighter," Jessica says. Faith loves make-up and various genres of music. She's artistic and very charismatic. Although sometimes Faith can appear shy, she is quick to open up with her personable and fun personality.

Upon graduating, Faith will continue her treatments for her conditions. She is planning to attend college and major in mortuary science. "She wants to go into this field because she wants to help families heal when they lose a loved one. She doesn't view death as scary, but as a natural part of life."

Her mom says they are very excited to see what the future holds for Faith. "We are always encouraging her to reach for the stars. We truly believe she's going to do great things in the future."

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QISD Board Approves 150-day Calendar for 2024-25 Despite State Overhaul

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Questa Independent School District (QISD) tentatively approved a new calendar for the 2024-25 academic year comprising 150 days, or a 4-day school week, the same as the current schedule. However, the district will most likely not meet a state-mandated 15 percent test score increase and therefore be forced into a 180-day academic calendar.

The mandated overhaul is due to a bill that passed New Mexico's 2023 legislative session, House Bill 130, sponsored by NM Representative Joy Garret (District 29), NM Representative Andres Romero (District 10), and NM Senator Mimi Stewart (District 17).

The mandated overhaul includes an exemption for districts that have achieved a 15 percent increase in test scores. According to QISD Superintendent John Maldonado only two districts in the state have achieved that threshold: Los Alamos Public Schools and East Mountain Charter School.

Read more about the education overhaul here:

<https://nmeducation.org/new-mexico-public-education-overhauls-school-calendar-with-180-day-rule-allowing-exemptions/>

Board Member Juan Cisneros made the motion to approve the 150-day calendar which was seconded by Board Vice-president Jose Lovato. They then went into further discussion on their options regarding the NM Public Education Department (PED).

"We're required to submit two calendars, but I can submit just the one if that's what you guys choose to do," said Superintendent Maldonado. "PED said that the budget would not be approved without the secondary calendar."

"Realistically, what would happen if every 4-day district approved a 150-day calendar right now?" asked Board Member Cisneros.

"What we received from PED is that

they just won't approve the budget," replied the Superintendent.

"Would they do that for everybody," asked Board Member Cisneros.

"So would they stop the district completely," asked Vice-president Lovato. "They rather just not send kids to school?"

"They would just shut them all down," Cisneros continued questioning.

"That's the threat [PED] has thrown to us at this point in time," acknowledged the Superintendent.

"Call it," said Cisneros brazenly with a smile.

"We can try it if that's what you guys want to do," said the Superintendent. "If [PED] throws it back at us and says this is what needs to be done, do we move forward with the 180-day calendar?"

"What does the budget reflect right now?" asked Vice-president Lovato.

"180 days," answered the Superintendent. "The big costs would be your

utility costs."

"If we submit this [150-day calendar] and PED doesn't kick it back, rather just suspends us and then says this is the calendar you're going to go with, then we get a worse calendar that we don't get to choose," added Board Secretary Esequiel Romero.

"That's a possibility," said the Superintendent. "We're tentatively approved for the 150 days but then, when test scores come out that's when [PED] will come back and say go to [180 days] because you didn't meet the requirements of your testing."

"Just tell them we said no," said Board Member Cisneros. "The thing is, everybody else is looking around for somebody to stand up."

There is much discontent from the Board towards PED with sentiments around the idea that the state is exerting unnecessary control over local school boards. Back in 2019 PED took

QISD CALENDAR cont'd on page 22



QISD Witnesses 2024 Eclipse

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER JOHN WALSH

On April 8, 2024, our QISD community spent an hour after lunch watching the 70 percent solar eclipse. Everyone was provided with glasses to view the

sight, and Domingo brought a telescope from the main office over to the football field to get an up-close view of the eclipse. Spencer Warnock took some pictures using his glasses. I heard a lot of "oohs" and "aahs" from students lounging on the grass, watching the spectacle. I had several students ask me if this meant the world was going to end. I assured them I had lived through multiple eclipses in my life and I was still kicking. In science class, we talked about how an eclipse happens, with the moon lining up with the sun to cause the effect of the sun partially disappearing in the midday sky. Several people commented that it seemed to get a little colder while it was happening and you could tell that the sunlight was a little darker. Just another day in the wonder that we call Earth.



Photo By Spencer Warnock

Photo of the 2024 Eclipse through a sunglass lens



Photo By Spencer Warnock

Sun Halo



Photo By Spencer Warnock

Eclipse Drawing by Ryan

Bobcat Club At Questa Alta Vista!

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER NAOMI GOMEZ

The Bobcat Club was started in February by Ms. Naomi Gomez, Mrs. Connie Martinez, Mrs. Sophia Rael, Mr.

Matt Polanco, Mrs. Debra Garcia, and Ms. Adkins. Our mission is to develop strategies to enhance behavior at Alta Vista Elementary School. We encourage students to make positive decisions, and each month they receive rewards as incentives. In March, our music room was transformed with a selection of board games, allowing Bobcat Club members to socialize and enjoy playing games together.



Photos By Naomi Gomez

2nd grade Bobcat Club participants play Jenga, sling hockey and play cards



Questa High School Class of 2024



Joaquin Arellano



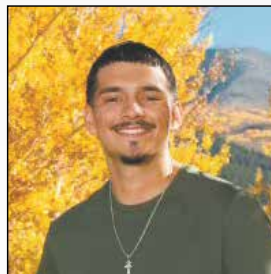
Diego Caraveo



Faith Cisneros



Anisa Clark



Esteban Gomez



Gerald Gomez



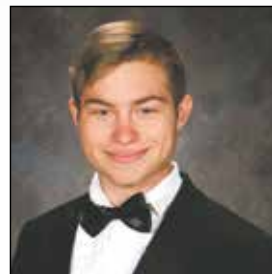
Praxedes Gonzales



Amalia Gonzalez



Marivel Gonzalez



Zander Jadlocki



AJ León



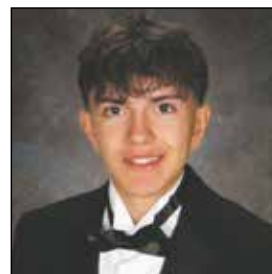
Markie Mascareñas



Ashton Mckenney



Isaac Ortega



Nathaniel Rael



Martin Rivera



Antonio Romero



Ricardo Sanchez



Jeremiah Vialpando



Destinee Vigil-Martinez

Congratulations Graduates

Chevron believes in the power of human ingenuity to lead us to a brighter future.
Class of 2024, lead the way.

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Attend Questa's 20th Annual Veterans Healing Field Celebration



Courtesy Photo

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER
LOUISE GALLEGOS

For those of you who may not know or realize what the Veterans Healing Field of Honor is and why we put it up every year, I will try and explain what it is and why it is so important to us. I believe the meaning is worth repeating and reminding people.

Back in 2003, then-Mayor Charlie Gonzales and Administrator Brent Jaramillo were attending a conference in Indiana. At this conference, there was a non-profit company from Sandy, Utah called Colonial Flag, and they made a presentation about a field of flags that they had started to honor the fallen officers and firemen who had lost their lives in the 911 attack. This "Healing Field" of flags has been adopted into many different types of "healing fields."

The Mayor and Council at that time felt that it would be a great way for the

Village of Questa to honor veterans from our community (community meaning Questa, Cerro, Costilla, Amalia, Lama, and San Cristobal) who served in the seven different conflicts that the U. S. has participated in.

Then the decision came to include all who are currently serving as well, because at that time our local 1115th National Guard transportation unit was being deployed to Iraq for the first time. The Mayor and Council wanted to honor them in a special way, so they decided on flying 1,000 flags. Another decision was made to have our ceremony on Sunday of Memorial Day weekend at 1 p.m. instead of Monday, the customary time that military groups have their ceremonies—this way more people would be able to attend our event.

This breathtaking event requires many hands to make this field a reality every year and the committee is dependent upon volunteers. Volunteers are the

heart and soul of this event because they put so much of their hearts, time, and talent into what they do year after year. Without them, this annual event would die out. Thank you to all volunteers!!

We are very fortunate that Entact has taken on the role of putting up and taking down the flags and donating the use of the lights at night. We are also fortunate that Questa Public Works Director for the Village John Rael, has taken on the role of watering the field and getting it prepped for the big event. Let us not forget Debbie Rael who has so generously donated the use of her field every year. Can't forget the Questa Fire Department and Questa Police Department for their assistance and presence at the ceremony. There is a lot of behind-the-scenes planning and execution of this enormous event!

I thank the Village of Questa staff and employees for their hard work year after year. This is such a spectacular event

and the feeling you come away with as a volunteer just can't be explained. Please remember we always need volunteers! Contact the Village Office to volunteer your time and/or talent.

We also ask for monetary sponsorships because without them, we would not have the monetary resources needed to host such an event. There are many costs associated with an event of this size. Replacing the flags alone can be very costly. Some years when the winds are high, we are replacing as many as 150 or 200 of the flags, at a cost of \$25 each.

In closing, I would just like to say if you feel the need to get involved to honor those who have served our country and preserved our freedoms and/or are currently serving, please contact the Village of Questa at (575) 586-0694.

Thank you for your time and attention. May God bless you and your families, and God bless America.



New Youth Coordinator

Vida Del Norte has been busy over the last couple of months with reorganizing and recruiting new members. In February, we had our annual retreat where we discussed data that helps guide the process of supporting the needs of our youth.

Vida has been seeking individuals who are passionate about the work that we do and we are happy to announce our new youth coordinator, Sonya Arguello. Sonya is native of the Questa community; she understands the culture and is eager and ready to put the work into community. We are excited to have her, as she brings some good experience through the professional world as well as life experience. She has begun to learn the ropes of what coalition work entails and will be heading up our summer program in collaboration with Localogy

and Questa Creative Council. Welcome aboard, Sonya!

Vida Del Norte will kick off summer with The Fish Fiesta on June 1 at Eagle Rock Lake, from 9 a.m. to noon, so come on out and enjoy some good family fun! We will have a small lunch available, and prizes for different events. We will also have kiddie fishing rods.

Vida Camp will begin July 1 and runs through the July 31 Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Base camp will be at the Youth Center, next to the Questa Library. To sign up please visit <https://www.localogy.org/vida>.

Vida also has some exciting new things on the horizon and more information will be released as we get closer to finalizing activities.



Courtesy Photo

Sonya Arguello

Fiestas de San Antonio del Rio Colorado Set for June

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Fiestas de San Antonio del Rio Colorado will take place again this year on Saturday June 15 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Molycorp Field.

The Fiesta Committee, led by Village Councilwoman Katrina Gonzales, is planning for another successful year and they need the support of the community.

If you're interested in being a food vendor, contact JoAnn Cisneros at (575) 770-3355. If you're interested in being any other vendor, you can contact Yolanda Sanchez at (575) 586-2052.

If you're interested in running for

Fiesta Reina, contact Maria Gonzalez at (575) 779-2260 and if you're interested in assisting with fundraising, contact Alyssah Duran at (575) 779-9426.

If you're interested in being in the musical lineup, contact Daniel Córdova at (575) 741-6067.

Donations to support this year's Fiestas are needed. Checks and donations can be made to LOCALOGY - Questa Fiestas at P.O. Box 1367, Questa, NM 87556.

If you would like to be involved in the 2024 Fiestas and the above categories don't match your interest, please contact the planning chairwoman Katrina Gonzales at (505) 730-7457.



Courtesy Photo

Questa Fiesta Royalty stands proudly on the stage after winners were announced in 2023

Well Done! HONORING VIDA DEL NORTE ACTIVE8 SENIORS

Vida Del Norte is very proud of these young individuals. These 5 Active8 Coalition members have been part of our youth coalition since the spring of 2019 they all have been active throughout the past 5 years and have been a big help to the coalition. To date, these are our longest retention of members, we thank them for their service to the coalition as well as to the community of Questa.

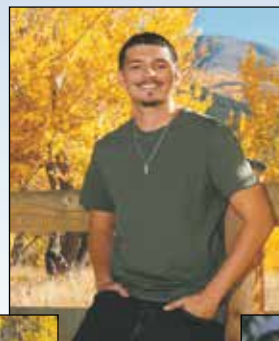
This year's seniors, as with past seniors will receive a \$300 scholarship from the Coalition. The scholarship requirements are simple. Members must have given 1 year of service and plan on attending a secondary education institute.

Vida Del Norte Extends a huge Congratulations to our Class of 2024 seniors! We are proud of you and we are excited to watch your journey as you transition into future endeavors.

This year we have 5 graduating seniors Amalia Gonzalez, Isaac Ortega, Esteban Gomez, Kaylee Piper, and Joaquin Arellano.



Joaquin Arellano:
Plans to attend a Culinary Arts program after high school



Esteban Gomez:
plans to attend UNM Taos to study Electrical Engineering



Amalia Gonzalez:
plans to attend the Vet Tech program at CNM in Albuquerque



Isaac Ortega: plans to attend NMSU to study Range Science



Kaylee Piper: has been busy and has already received her CNA certification and will continue to attend UNM- Taos Nursing Program.



Follow us on facebook.com/vidadelnortecoalition

How Can You Get Involved!
visit <http://vidadelnorte.com/get-involved>

Vida Del Norte Drug Free Coalition

Contribute to Village of Questa's Comprehensive Plan

By STAFF WRITERS

The Village of Questa's Comprehensive Plan is being established to create a vision and framework for its implementation. The executive leaders of the Village are "working with Village staff, community members, businesses, and leaders to understand what Questa is today and what you hope it will become in the future," according to a press release sent by the Village.

The Village wants to ensure residents know they can have a voice in shaping the future of the Village and so are encouraging the community to help them understand issues, allowing the Village to then create opportunities to achieve future goals.

The release goes on to describe the Comprehensive Plan, which will provide an assessment of Questa's current condition, providing a baseline understanding of the community's history and how it grew to be what it is today.

Next, it documents what residents and community leaders in the Village want for the future. Lastly, and most

importantly, it details how the Village can take steps to realize that future. This action plan should be a guide for current and future decision-making among Village leaders and residents who help to carry out this work.

The Plan will look at the following elements to try to understand the community's needs and opportunities:

- Natural resources
- Land use
- Economic development
- Housing
- Community services and facilities
- Transportation and infrastructure
- Hazard mitigation

Another important aspect of the Comprehensive Plan is identifying needs that support the Village's capital funding (Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan) requests for the state of New Mexico. This will provide critical support and consensus for the Village's priority projects and programs that will require investment in the coming years.

The actions identified in the Plan may also provide direction for updated policies or ordinances that the Village



Courtesy Photo

Residents giving input at a public comment session in Questa

needs to make for the future. Finally, this document will make the Village's future grant applications more competitive.

The Village of Questa is in the beginning of the planning process and they would love to hear from you! They will be at the Questa Farmers' Market

on May 26 and at the Healing Fields community event later in the afternoon that same day. They welcome you to stop by, say hello, and share your ideas! If you have any questions and would like to reach out by email you can email Dani at dwilson@sites-sw.com.

Senator Ben Ray Luján Met with Leaders in Northern New Mexico

By STAFF WRITERS

Senator Ben Ray Luján visited northern Taos County to meet with leaders from the Town of Taos, Taos County, and the Village of Questa to discuss federal investments in rural parts of New Mexico.

According to a release from his office, Senator Luján secured \$77 million for New Mexico projects, including investments in flood and fire mitigation, health care access, small business support, workforce development, public safety, agriculture, behavioral health services, affordable housing, military installations, and acequia and water infrastructure upgrades.

The release goes on to say that Senator Luján first met with local leaders from the Town of Taos at their local wastewater treatment plant to discuss upgrades needed to accommodate the town's population increase and additional growth. Luján toured the facility and discussed the much needed upgrades with Mayor Pascual Maestas, Town Manager Andrew Gonzales, Assistant Town Manager French Espinoza, and Public Works Director Dena Miller.



Courtesy Photo

Senator Luján (in the navy blue vest) meets with Mayor Ortega, Kit Carson Electric, and other community leaders to discuss critical infrastructure investments

The release says that following their meeting, Senator Luján toured the Historic Taos County Courthouse to highlight the federal investment he secured to restore the courthouse to its original historical condition, dating back to 1932. In total, Luján secured \$600,000 to execute this first phase of construction. When the project is complete, the building will feature an architecturally correct torreón on each side of its facade

and an interior true to original plans.

According to a Facebook post on Questa Mayor John Ortega's page, he says "We met with Senator Ben Ray Luján, Kit Carson Electric Cooperative leadership, County Commissioner Miguel Romero and Governor Romero and War Chief Bernal from Taos Pueblo, to discuss projects in which the Senator has helped with Congressionally directed spending, and also future projects. It was

a great meeting and a great day. Thank you, Senator, for coming to Questa and you all for attending."

The release recapped the meeting, noting that Senator Luján met with the Village of Questa Mayor John Ortega, Kit Carson Electric CEO Luis Reyes, and other local leaders to highlight several

SENATOR LUJAN cont'd on page 13



VILLAGE VOICE

Letter to Questa Community from Mayor John Ortega

Dear Questa Residents:

I realize some of the Village roads are in bad shape and have lots of potholes. My staff and I are working diligently to get funding to repave all these roads. Last year we applied for funding for seven roads projects, and we were awarded DOT funding on three of those road projects. This year we will again apply for the funding to repave the roads that weren't funded last year. We do have partial funding on some of these roads, but it is not enough to complete the projects.

In the meantime, we will be placing road millings and asphalt mix to repair some of the worst potholes. Our crew will be working diligently to get those fixed. The difficulty with that is the holes must be completely dry with no predicted snow in the forecast to get those

done, if not it will all come out when the roads are snow plowed.

Here is the list of roads we requested funding for in 2023:

- Cabresto Rd. Phase 2 - was not funded. Partial funded, will be completing draining and culvert work this summer. We still need about \$1 million dollars for full completion.
- Cabresto Rd. Phase 3 - fully funded in 2023, hope to complete this summer.
- Embargo Rd. - was not funded. Partial funding from Chevron and DOT. We need about \$2 million dollars to complete.
- Lower Embargo Rd.- Partially funded, we need about \$500 thousand to complete.
- Lower Embargo Rd. Bridge - funded in 2023, we hope to complete by next spring, will include a walking bridge.
- Old Lama Rd. - was not funded, we will be seeking funding. Need about \$1.5 million to complete.
- Shirley Dr. - fully funded in 2023. Small project, mostly draining and grading to be done this summer.
- Old State Rd 3 - seeking funding.
- Mountain View Road - seeking funding.

We are also having a road assessment done on all roads to see their status, speed limits, speed bumps and condition.

I apologize for not getting these all done sooner, we are working on it. Please let me know if you have and additional questions. My number is (575) 779-2474.

SENATOR LUJAN cont'd from page 12

important projects to create new economic opportunities in Questa, including an investment of over \$1.6 million for the Village of Questa convention facility. This funding will help develop a facility that can house economic development opportunities for Questa and surrounding rural communities, and host local heritage events for northern New Mexico. Luján also helped secure \$500,000 for the Kit Carson Electric Cooperative to produce green hydrogen, a renewable energy resource, by repurposing the Chevron Mine facility in Questa. This project will create new jobs, attract additional investment to the community, and address energy needs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"Today, I had the honor of hearing directly from local leaders and seeing firsthand the upgrades needed to

improve local wastewater infrastructure in rural New Mexico. Like so many small communities across the state, the Town of Taos is rapidly growing, and the federal government must be there to provide support and facilitate that growth," said Senator Luján. "That's why I look forward to bringing their concerns back to Washington to help the Town of Taos address their critical wastewater infrastructure needs."

Senator Luján continued, "Ending the day, it was a privilege to meet with leaders from the Village of Questa to celebrate over \$1.6 million in federal funding to build a local convention center to create a place for coming together while boosting economic development. It was also an honor to highlight an additional \$500,000 investment I secured to help boost green hydrogen production in Questa, ensuring this community has more opportunities to spur the production of renewable energy."

Governor Signs Four Public Safety Bills

By NASH JONES, KUNM NEWS

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham Monday signed four bills lawmakers passed as part of her public safety priority for this year's legislative session. Two were related to gun control and two others focused on keeping more people deemed dangerous off the street. While she called the new laws a "giant leap" in the right direction, she said she's still considering calling a special legislative session to urge lawmakers to send a few more to her desk.

The governor signed the bills at West Mesa High School in Albuquerque, where a 14-year-old shot and killed another student just off campus in 2022. The governor told students in attendance that policy makers and school administrators need to come together to prevent gun violence.

"And demand that this isn't how we want to live anymore," she said. "So, we're going to get upstream and

prevent it. But, until we get there, you deserve our attention to make sure that you get everything you're supposed to get out of school."

She signed into law a 7-day waiting period for gun sales. Sponsor Rep. Andrea Romero (D-Santa Fe) called it a "cooling-off period," meant to cut down on impulsive acts of gun violence.

Exceptions to the waiting period include those with concealed carry permits and federal firearms licenses, as well as law enforcement and sales between immediate family members.

The governor also signed legislation that bars carrying a gun within 100 feet of an election polling place. Exceptions apply to law enforcement and concealed carry permit holders here as well, along with people who aren't conducting election-related business in the vicinity.

SAFETY BILL cont'd on pg 36

EPA Reps Speak With Local Residents

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) visited the Village of Questa on April 16 to talk about progress in the Superfund cleanup of the old Chevron mine. EPA Environmental Engineer Nicole Foster focused her talk on the mine site to the east of the Village and the tailings facility to the west.

“For about a hundred years we had mining of molybdenum in the area both underground and open-pit... in 2014 the mine permanently closed down,” Foster began with a brief background of the mine. “The real take away is that it has left us with 300 million tons of waste rock that needs to be cleaned up and reclaimed and also one hundred million tons of tailings.”

Tailings are the term for waste by-product of the processing of mined ore, consisting of ground rock, unrecoverable metals, chemicals, and organic matter. Tailing facilities are designed to contain such waste produced by mining operations and Questa has two such facilities.

The operation to clean up the defunct mine is made up of five sites: the mill area, the mine site area, the tailings facility area, Eagle Rock Lake, and the south tailings facility area. These sites comprise the whole Superfund site, which is governed by a Record of Decision from the EPA, a document that defines the options available for cleanup based upon effects on the land, wildlife, and humans in the area.

The EPA has two primary administrative instruments in place to facilitate the Superfund site: an Administrative Order

on Consent (AOC) and a Consent Decree. The AOC is essentially an agreement between parties involved (Chevron, EPA, the State of New Mexico, etc.) that is legally binding but more easily amenable to the latter option, the Consent Decree, which is undertaken through parties involved as well as the U.S. Department of Justice and signed by a federal judge.

Questa del Rio News participated in a tour of the mine area in November of 2023 during which we saw the details of the cleanup process, particularly water treatment. Water filtration is an essential component of the Superfund site. “In our Record of Decision Chevron is required to keep [ground water levels] in the mine area lower than the Red River,” explained Foster.

Read more here:

<https://questanews.com/agua-es-vida-molybdenum-mine-tourhighlights-need-to-resolve-ongoing-water-rights-dispute/>

“I know they’re doing reclamation in the mine area, but I want to know what they’re doing or what is going to be done about [an excavated canyon through U.S. Forest Service property],” inquired a Questa resident in the audience, claiming that it disrupted the watershed and has caused contamination of his private well water since 2016.

“As far as I’m aware, if [the land] is attached to the Forest Service and it’s not a part of the mine site...” Foster began. “It is a part of the mine site because they excavated it,” interrupted the resident. “He’s talking about underneath Largo Canyon,” clarified Village of Questa Councilor



Jason Gonzalez.

“I would like to have that watershed restored,” said the resident. “I’ve talked to the State and they said they don’t have jurisdiction. Meanwhile, my well water is contaminated.”

EPA representatives simply explained that Largo Canyon would be under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service and encouraged the resident to keep reaching out to them. “We can’t really promise

anything,” said EPA’s Kevin Myers. “We can certainly go out and take a look at it but any action would ultimately involve the Forest Service.”

EPA’s Nicole Foster can be reached at (214) 665-7248 or foster.nichole@epa.gov as listed on the EPA’s landing page for the Questa Superfund site: <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0600806>.

QISD CALENDAR cont’d from page 16

direct control over the QISD, citing allegations of unstable leadership and legal violations.

Read more on that history here: <https://www.krqe.com/news/new-mexico/ped-suspends-questa-school-board/>

Board Member Cisneros stated that he personally would prefer a 5-day school week to a 4-day one but also acknowledged, “it’s obvious here that that is not what a majority of people in this district want and that is why they voted for us.”

“They didn’t stick us here to do whatever PED tells us to do.”

Superintendent Maldonado recom-

mends submitting a secondary calendar as a backup option.

“It’s really a smokescreen,” said Board Member Cisneros referring to the mandated overhaul, “because the failure has been on [PED] for how many years. There is nothing actually changing by adding more days.”

“What worries me,” said Vice-president Lovato, “is [the added days] will just make the teachers burn out.”

“Not only burn out,” added the Superintendent, “but your attendance is not going to improve.”

The Superintendent also described the difficulty following the mandatory days requirement on top of the mandatory hours requirement saying it unnecessarily increases costs for schools as well as puts more pressure on parents

shuttling their kids; it would be more logical to either have an hours requirement or a days requirement, not both.

“These conversations have been had, it’s just PED,” said Maldonado. “And I agree with [Board Secretary Romero] in that if we don’t do what they ask us to do then they’ll just tell us what to do.”

“Well, they’re not asking us anyway,” said Board Member Michael Cordova.

“There’s no right answer here at all,” said Vice-president Lovato regrettably. “I don’t think anyone really wins on this. Local control is next to nothing and, over the next five years, it’s probably going to be gone.”

“We already know what the answer is going to be,” said Board President Jason Rael. “I doubt we’ll be able to hit the 15 percent score mark. That’s almost im-

possible to do for a rural district. Either way we have to get the budget and we’re looking at the 180-day. If we tell [PED] that we don’t like it and we’ll go with ours, they’ll just come back at us, and shoot it down anyway, forcing us back to the 180-day.”

“Our goal with the budget has always been to bill to the worst case scenario,” said Vice-president Lovato.

“The worst thing that happens is [PED] pushes us to do whatever anyway,” said Board Member Cisneros. “It’s not even about the calendar, it’s about us doing what the people elected us to do. PED didn’t vote for me.”

The Board ultimately voted on their original motion for the 150-day calendar. The vote was 4-1 with Board Secretary Romero dissenting.



LOR FOUNDATION
UPDATE
BY AEDAN HANNON

Celebrating Questa's Seniors

Each spring represents a new beginning. As the snow recedes, trees and flowers blossom, animals emerge, and Questa fills with life. Spring also serves as a new beginning for Questa's high school seniors. At graduation, Questa's future engineers, doctors, electricians, teachers, farmers, and first responders mark

the end of one career and the launch of another.

For this particular group of seniors, graduation is not just a new beginning but a monumental achievement. As freshmen, they were thrown into a public health crisis and a new world shaped by the coronavirus pandemic. Over the last four years, they have struggled, strived, and achieved. Against all odds, they have found success. We were especially proud to support this year's light-pole street banners highlighting Questa's remarkable seniors.

"Our seniors have come so far," says Questa community officer Maria Gonzalez. "All of our seniors have found a way to succeed in difficult times, and LOR is thrilled to be part of congratulating them."

Like this year's seniors, Questa's

animal rescue volunteers have also persevered. When Taos County and Stray Hearts Animal Shelter ended their work together last year, Questa's vulnerable animals were left with few options, as were the people who care for them. Volunteers started seeing more puppy drop-offs and stray dogs, an issue that quickly became a crisis.

Local volunteer Jen Melton has been relentless in her efforts to help Questa's stray dogs, launching a new group called High Desert Hounds late last year. Melton and High Desert Hounds aim to provide housing and medical services to Taos County's stray animals, improving their quality of life. With support from the LOR Foundation, Melton and High Desert Hounds have created an emergency shelter for Questa's homeless dogs, and they continue to raise awareness about

the growing issue of stray animals in Questa and Taos County.

"Our project champions see local problems and want to solve them," Gonzalez says. "Every day locals are making our community better for all Questa residents."

If you've got a solution, reach out to Gonzalez at maria@lorfoundation.org or (575) 665-2001. Or stop by the Healing Field of Honor Memorial Day event, where she'll have a booth.

LOR works with rural communities in the Mountain West to enhance livability and prosperity while preserving the character that makes each community unique. LOR supports locally led community projects that improve transportation, housing, the environment, education, civic engagement, water, health, and the economy.



LOR Empowers High Desert Hounds

Thanks to the generous support of the LOR Foundation, this summer High Desert Hounds will be distributing pet food, supplies, and providing transportation assistance to get pets spayed, neutered, or vaccinated (free services)—to anyone in the community who may need them.

High Desert Hounds will be holding weekly events at the Questa Farmer's Market, where these things will be available, along with an information booth for additional resources like dog training, humane education, and a sign-up sheet for transportation assistance to medical care for animals, and to raise awareness about animal welfare. We are thrilled to be a part of the Questa Farmer's Market this year to make these services more accessible within the community.

Questa, like most other rural American towns, has long faced challenges in accessing basic necessities for people, animals, and their care. High Desert Hounds is committed to bridging this

gap and serving as a support system. We believe in the power of collaboration and community engagement to create meaningful change.

We look forward to meeting members of the community and sharing information about our services. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about High Desert Hounds, please stop by our booth at the Questa Farmers Market on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning May 25 through October 6, or visit our website at www.HighDesertHounds.Org. Together, we can make a difference and create a brighter future for animals in Taos County.



Courtesy Photo

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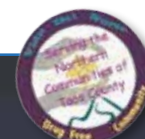
GRADUATION SAFETY TIPS

PARENTS

- Connect with other parents to stay in communication about your kids before, during and after graduation parties and events.
- Talk to your kids about not drinking and doing drugs at any of the graduates parties or afterparties. Stress the aftermath of drinking or doing drugs (embarrassment, shame, getting in trouble with the law, don't let the last impression of you to your classmates be that of a drunken dangerous mess of a person).
- Plan a supervised alcohol free after-party for kids (include a cash prize for staying sober).
- Set the right example for your kids, don't provide alcohol or drugs for graduates, don't be the "cool mom" or "cool dad," you could be contributing to your kid's first DWI or DUI just for being "cool".

KIDS

- Be a safe passenger, don't distract the drivers of the vehicle on the way to Graduation parties or events.
- Get ready at home, try not to be distracted getting ready in the car accidents happen from distracted driving as well as drunk driving.
- Seatbelts are the perfect accessory for your Graduation attire and also put the phone down while you are driving. No notification from snapchat or instagram is that important.
- Don't drink and do drugs—especially not if you're driving. If all else fails, be the Designated Driver and get your friends home safe. They will owe you one!



vidadelnorte.com



Questa Collaborates with Red River for Mayfest in the Mountains

The Questa Creative Council has been invited to collaborate with Red River during their new Memorial Day celebration, Mayfest in the Mountains,

which is replacing its long-held motorcycle rally and copious street vendors with all-local participation instead—family-friendly games, workshops, exhibits, local music, and... a “quick-draw” painting event that the QCC has been invited to manage. It will be held all day Sunday, May 26, a great way to round out the weekend! All of you are invited.

Both of our villages remember our popular multi-day event, the Wild Rivers Plein Air Paint-Out, with artists visiting from around the state to paint in and around our national monument. A one-day “quick-draw,” where artists complete paintings in a short time frame, was part of the Paint-Out.

While that larger event is no more, the QCC did inaugurate a solo “Questa Quick-Draw” last June that drew artists from Taos, Red River, and Questa to paint our historic village, all of this with-

in a 6-hour timeframe. The artists had a lot of fun (see photo). Artwork was sold, and cash prizes were won.

ARTISTS, youth and adults, you are invited to the Mayfest Quick-Draw! It is FREE and there will be cash prizes and an exhibit in the afternoon, with food, drinks and live music. No pre-registration is required, just arrive ready to paint with your materials. Kids and youth will be given painting supplies at no cost.

Here are the basics, and you can get all the details on our website. On Sunday, May 26:

- 8 to 9 a.m. – Artists, bring your art supplies and register at the gazebo in Brandenburg Park, get canvases stamped, then scatter to the scenic locales of your choice and paint. Buses will be running all day on the circuit between Red River’s three parks. Venture further into the mountains, or

down Hwy 38, but be mindful of the return time of 3 p.m.

- 3 p.m. – Artists, bring completed canvases to The Vine (formerly TBucks on Main St.) by 3:30 at the latest.
- 4 to 6 p.m. – Public reception! Art works will be displayed, prizes will be awarded, including People’s Choice, and there will be drink, food, and live music.

Even if you don’t consider yourself an artist, this will be a fabulous environment to look at some wonderful art of beloved local scenes. Or try your hand at painting! Purchases will reward our local artists, with a commission offered to support the QCC.

More details on the Red River’s Mayfest at RedRiver.org. For Quick-Draw details go to QuestaCreative.org, or leave a message with Martha at (575) 776-7579.



SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, June 8

Celebrate Questa! festival event with guided Questa History Trail walk, Art Market vendor booths, delicious local food from Wendy and Casey, and live music—

Arcane Ramblers and Arellano Brothers, all at the Village Center farmers market site from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Weekend of August 10-11

9th annual Questa Art Tour! Each year sees more artists, more variety, and more visitors. Join us on the tour, maps ready soon. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. ARTISTS: Applications are due NOW. (May 1 deadline extended, to avoid a late fee.)



Questa Library Does It Again!

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER
SHARON NICHOLSON,
Library Director

For many summers, we have provided a program of fun-based reading. I am happy to say this year is no exception! Under the direction of Monica McClelland, Summer Reading 2024 starts things off with "Adventures in Trucking" on Friday, June 7.

This year's theme is "Adventure Begins at Your Library." Some of our adventures will include a magic show, collage, journaling, camping, foraging, mud play, graffiti art, and plenty of surprises along the way. We also expect some great reading and writing adventures. Children ages 4 to 10 are invited! We meet on Tuesdays and Fridays from June 7 through July 19.

Older kids are encouraged to let us know if they would like to participate so we can plan activities with them in mind! Parents are always welcome... they help make the program move smoothly, and we love their input in our programs. Look to the June issue of the *Questa Del Rio News* for a schedule of activities on those Tuesdays and Fridays.

Are you interested in helping with the program? We will need nutritious snacks, help with registration, assistance in preparing for each program, and someone to do frequent posting on social media. For more information, please contact us at the library: (575) 613-3010.



PRAYER EVENT QUESTA

6:30PM @LWM



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LIGHT UP THE WORLD

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THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024



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The Art of Acequias & Cultural Landscape of the Northern Rio Grande: An Interactive Exhibit



Courtesy Photo

**Scott Sutton
with his art**

By CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
SCOTT SUTTON and PEGGY TRIGG

The Questa Public Library presents Scott Sutton's interactive display, "The Art of Acequias & Cultural Landscape of the Northern Rio Grande." In this art installation, he will share with the community the geological beauty and understanding that surrounds our precious water.

The exhibit highlights the relationships that Cerro, Questa, El Rito and Sunshine Valley have had with water for over the past 200 years.

Historically, the area was known as San Antonio Del Rio Colorado. Its first acequias, including the Acequia De La Plaza, were dug in 1815—these same acequias have been used to sustain life as a source of water for livestock, pastures, orchards, and gardens for generations.

The art installation will include historical maps of the area, including land grants,

acequia maps, topography maps, and geological maps that highlight the unique aspects of both the natural and cultural landscapes of the place we all call home.

Art that reflects a sense of place using local materials and mapping will be displayed on the walls of the library as well as in a large portfolio book where you can flip through the pages to view a diversity of historical maps of the acequia systems that include Costilla, Latir, Cabresto, and Red River watersheds—all a source of water to the Upper Rio Grande Basin.

The exhibit will also include local minerals, clays, and soils that reveal the beautiful colorations that comprise this land, along with a diversity of plants that grow in the native ecosystem—cultural landscapes that have been cultivated for generations.

Sutton, whose home, or Querencia, exists here in northern New Mexico, is cre-

ating an art studio and artist-in-residence program focused on creating a sense of place using sustainable building materials and regenerating relationships with the land through the development of community orchards and gardens in Questa.

Sutton has been making paints with natural materials from the land, such as colorful minerals and clay and plant-based dyes, for over 20 years. He studied fine art at Oregon State University and then received a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of New Mexico. Over the years his work has begun to weave together the creation of art, the art of pigment hunting, and the mapping of landscapes for a better understanding of topography and water, from the headwaters of the mountains down to acequias in gardens.

Currently, Sutton is taking classes at UNM in the Historic Preservation pro-

gram, which includes historical research and an acequia class.

Don't miss this beautiful and informative show. Get to know our local acequias!

EXHIBIT:
Thursday, May 2 – June 30, 2024

OPENING EVENTS:
Saturday, May 18

Acequia Mapping Workshop
Noon – 2 p.m.

Art Exhibit Opening
2 -4 p.m.

WHERE: Questa Public Library, 6½
Municipal Park Dr., Questa, NM

MORE INFO: contact

Peggy Trigg (505) 974-5314

Library hours are noon to 5 p.m.

Monday through Saturday. For more

information, please call the library at

(575) 586-2023.

Enchanted Circle Trails Association Presents Trail Plans

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Enchanted Circle Trails Association (ECTA) Director Loren Bell presented to the Questa Village Council seeking further cooperation with the Village in pursuit of plans to revitalize our network of nature trails.

The ECTA has been working since 2017 on their Enchanted Circle Trails Plan that would primarily:

- Identify new priority trails for a variety of outdoors enthusiasts at all skill levels
- Identify the most active transit routes, both urban and back-country, to further connect different communities across the landscape
- Engage communities to facilitate cooperation between land managers, the public, and other stakeholders

An important priority of the ECTA is to connect the communities of Questa and Red River through the construction of a new trail starting at the west end of Red River, continuing to Eagle Rock Lake. Characterized by wide pathways and low incline angles, the trail aims for

easier accessibility.

In explaining the need for a new trail between Questa and Red River, Bell described a recent experience he had near State Highway 38. He saw two elderly women walking too close to the highway for comfort. While nothing happened, he was concerned for their safety, walking so close to the highway.

“Where we are in this initial planning...ECTA has taken the lead in the development of the Q2RRT and we've worked with Red River to find funding for... an environmental assessment,” said Bell in his presentation. “The funding for that is coming from a capital outlay grant that Red River secured as base funding and a federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant through the New Mexico Department of Transportation. We use the capital outlay to match with the RTP grant; the capital outlay is \$220,000, the RTP is \$295,110.”

To clarify, the Recreational Trails Program is a federal reimbursement program that distributes funds through the state government of New Mexico.

The Q2RRT will likely involve new

infrastructure for trail heads as well as river crossings. ECTA is contracting with SE Group to make sure everything will be compliant with the United States National Environment Policy Act (NEPA).

The capital outlay funds combined with the RTP grant will cover the NEPA assessment and some initial engineering, but ECTA will be looking for additional sources of funding.

“What do you think about the final cost for this project?” inquired Councilor Jason Gonzalez as the presentation moved to questioning.

“I imagine somewhere within the \$1.5-2 million range in order to construct,” replied Director Bell.

“Have you begun the construction of the trail, or is it still in the planning stages?” asked Councilor Louise Gallegos.

“We're still in the planning,” answered Bell. “The biggest hurdle is this environmental assessment... the Forest Service has to go through that before they can do any new development on federal land, to make sure to mitigate any potential impacts to wildlife and

such.” Construction cannot begin until the NEPA environmental assessment has been completed.

ECTA has also been working on a plan to develop more recreational trails throughout Largo Canyon to the southeast of Questa (near MolyCorp Field). This project was the product of brainstorming done by the Questa Economic Development Fund (QEDF) and a non-profit called Public Land Solutions with the goal of assessing the economic potential of Questa's recreational sector. Largo Canyon was identified as high in value.

“It's a pretty exciting project, but we are in the very beginning stages of coming up with conceptual ideas,” explained Bell. “We've had three public meetings so far.” Once the Largo Canyon plan is conceptualized and presented to the U.S. Forest Service, it will then need to go through the same NEPA environmental assessment.

ECTA hopes to revitalize the Questa area's recreational economy with both of these plans.

Presentation of a Questa Agricultural Cooperative

STAFF WRITERS

The idea of an agricultural cooperative in the Questa area is something that has been explored many times over the years. In 2023 the Questa Economic Development Fund held several public “listening” sessions to collectively envision a viable co-op program that could benefit our community and the growers in the region. QEDF Director Lynn Skall stated, “We now have an agricultural co-op model and recommendations to present.”

On Wednesday, May 8, at 5:30 p.m. at the Village Council Chambers, QEDF with partners and consultants from the Arrowhead Research Center of NM State University will present their detailed report and recommendations regarding an agricultural cooperative “retail outlet” in the Questa area. The community is encouraged to attend, to share your ideas and feedback, and to enjoy dinner ‘on us.’

Outcomes from the 2023 community meetings indicated that there is

a need in our area for an agricultural cooperative that will help promote and support area farmers and ranchers in their regional food production, to provide consistent access for residents to purchase and consume local produce, meats, and value-added products, while establishing a system of local food security sovereignty, and sustainability.

Dominick Apodaca, the owner and manager of the Sangre de Cristo Valley Market in Questa, has expressed interest in having the market be a part of the solution. Skall added, “the recommendations being presented on May 8 are viable options that can be easily implemented through the dedication of a committed group of collaborators willing to put the model(s) into practice.”

Join us for the meeting, learn about these ag coop options, and be a part of the next steps. For more information, contact lynn@questaedf.com or leave a message at (575)586-2149.

Agricultural Co-op Roundtable

May 8th at the Questa Village Council Chambers
5:30pm to 7:00pm
Dinner provided

Join us for a community discussion around a local ag co-op model organized by Questa Economic Development Fund and Arrowhead Center

- Review feasibility report
- Discuss co-op model
- Assess community resources
- Align next steps

Register at
<https://forms.gle/nthNeU6uc8yKTa9X7>



Location:
2500 Old State Rd. 3,
Questa, NM 87556
Zoom link available via request

For more info contact
Lynn Skall 575-586-2149
lynn@questaedf.com

ARROWHEAD CENTER 



By Toner Mitchell

Caddis Time!

As on many rivers in the western U.S.—the Yellowstone, Sacramento, Arkansas most famously—the caddisfly hatch on the Rio Grande is an event that anglers look forward to every spring. The hatch begins around Velarde in early April, sometimes progressing gradually upstream to the state line, sometimes erupting everywhere at once. Eruption is definitely the word for it. Mothlike caddisflies cloud the air and blanket streamside boulders, which is why it's not surprising to see the trout celebrating the hatch with us.

During the caddis hatch, abundance and rebirth seem to be everywhere you look. Sap is rising, and buds burst into bloom. Gray gramma takes on a greenish hue as birdsong fills the air. The short sleeves and sunscreen come out, and the

river is a flurry of splashing fish.

As experienced caddis nuts are well aware, the chaos isn't a dawn to dusk affair. Hours can go by with few fish being caught, even as a blizzard of bugs fills the air. This is often because the trout are gorged with flies and pupae and literally can't eat another bite. The evidence for this is the state of the trouts' bodies, their bulging bellies and distended sides. Of course, the Rio's entire fish population doesn't keep the same eating schedule; fish are always eating, though not always where you happen to be fishing.

When the fishing slows down, drift your flies on or near the stream bottom, nymphs with dark bodies in sizes 12 to 16. A little flash or sparkle helps, though traditional peacock and dark brown hare's ear bodies will work just fine. When fish start getting busy on the surface, a classic elk hair dry fly is usually all you need. Don't worry too much about getting the perfect drift, as a dragging dry fly will still draw plenty of strikes. A look at the real flies shows you why: flies are active, flitting here and there across the surface, triggering splashy attacks from fish intent on preventing escape.

The best action usually begins in the middle of the afternoon and lasts until sundown, when my favorite approach is



Courtesy Photo

Caddis-fattened wild rainbow trout from the Rio Grande

casting a renegade dry fly downstream and letting it swing across the current. I love the hard strikes I get when fishing this method. The biggest challenge is trying not to set the hook but simply raising the rod to tighten into the fish. In most cases, the fish hook themselves, and setting the hook risks breaking the line.

By my observation, lure and bait fishermen catch a small fraction of what fly fishermen do during the caddisfly hatch. Not to say they catch nothing; the water is a perfect temperature in April, and the fish are locked in eating mode. I can definitely

imagine that a small Panther Martin, if not reeled in too fast, looks like an emerging caddis pupa and might induce a fish to eat.

Fish are generally insane during this spectacular natural event, a reminder to anglers that we should limit our impact on the fishing resource. Without even trying, we can catch dozens of fish if we're fishing in the right place and time. After catching enough fish, consider breaking off the point of your hook and swinging your fly just for strikes. You'll still feel the electricity from the tug on your line. Better yet, you'll be able to watch the sunset while sharing the river with its happy fish.



BIRD IS THE WORD

By Bryce Flanagan

Spring Migration

As the snow melts and flowers bloom, this season is an excellent time to see birds making their way through New Mexico on their migratory path. Hummingbirds are already here, and higher elevations such as Questa and Eagle Nest will likely see Broad-tailed Hummingbirds (identifiable by their long tail feathers that extend just past their wing-tips, iridescent green backs and bright magenta throats on males) while lower elevations will see more Black-chinned Hummingbirds (characterized by the black head and violet throat in males while females have more dull coloring). Bringing these birds into your backyard is easy: just put out a feeder filled with one part purified water to four parts white cane sugar (be sure to only use granulated

white sugar, since brown sugar, stevia and other variants aren't easily digestible by hummingbirds—and never use red dyes, as these are toxic to birds).

Hummingbirds are very territorial little critters, and if you find your backyard to be the center of a turf war you can ease tensions by placing feeders far apart from each other. Just try to position feeders in the shade so hummingbirds can cool down and their nectar won't get too hot. Nectar should be changed every five days when it's cool and every two days when it's hot (80 degrees Fahrenheit or more). Extra nectar can be stored in the fridge for up to two weeks. Cleaning feeders is important, especially with bird flu on the rise—each time your feeders need to be refilled, disassemble them and clean them with hot, soapy water.

Other visitors to look forward to are two yellow-bellies: the Wilson's Warbler and Yellow Warbler. While both species are a striking yellow, the Wilson's Warbler can be distinguished by a black cap on males and grayish wings on both sexes, whereas Yellow Warblers are yellow all over with chestnut streaks on the males' chests. These birds are more likely to be spotted in the woods and prefer foraging for insects along the forest floor. You may

be able to lure them to backyard feeders with mealworms, and Wilson's Warblers may occasionally eat berries as well.

Just like with hummingbird feeders, seed and suet feeders should be cleaned regularly (every two weeks) with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water and a stiff bottle brush to remove grime. Be sure to keep the ground beneath feeders clean as well—picky eaters may discard unwanted seeds and let other birds pick over the leftovers, and these seed piles can spread disease easily if not cleaned up.

Since bird flu is prominent this season, scientists recommend spacing feeders apart and avoiding platform feeders to lessen crowding and close contact. Bird flu is rare among songbirds, who are the primary visitors to feeders, but keep a sharp eye out for any symptoms like lethargy, swollen eyes, and purple discoloration on the legs. Being a birder can be quite a chore, but when you're scrubbing away at those feeders, just imagine your backyard visitors twittering their thanks to you. They have quite the journey ahead of them, and backyard feeders are the ideal rest stop for them.

The greater the variety of feeders and feed you offer, the more birds you'll see. I personally use a couple of feeders shaped

like little houses, and fill them with a mix of black oil sunflower seeds and a fruit-nut mix; about ¾ sunflower seeds and ¼ fruits and nuts; and a suet feeder stocked with peanut suet. Don't bother with seed mixes that contain millet, as you'll just have a mess under your feeders, as birds peck it away to get to the good stuff. Thistle socks, suet feeders, and oriole fruit feeders can be added if you want to see every species the northern New Mexico mountains have to offer. Suet will attract woodpeckers, Steller's Jays, and magpies; thistle seeds will bring in goldfinches, house finches and sparrows; and oriole feeders will attract, you guessed it, orioles.

To see what species are migrating through, check the migration map at bird-cast.info. Birders can help scientists gather important data by reporting backyard bird sightings through the eBird app, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology offers the Merlin app to help with bird identification. Most birds make their migratory journey during the night. When we reduce excess light pollution by turning off garden lights and covering windows with curtains, we make their navigation easier. Our feathered friends will thank you for the help.

U.S. Forest Service Encourages Residents To Stay Informed

By STAFF WRITERS

As officials with Carson National Forest work to mitigate extreme wildfire risk in northern New Mexico, they want the community to be aware of upcoming projects to reduce panic, should a plume of smoke be visible, all while keeping residents informed.

“The prescribed fire project work is an important part of protecting our water sources and ensuring that we do our best to mitigate wildfire risk to communities,” said Carson National Forest Supervisor James Duran. “I am proud of our team, which is working to continually find opportunities to return fire to landscapes across the forest.”

If you would like to be notified of planned prescribed burns and fire projects, the forest service provides several ways you can stay informed:

- You can request to be added to the email release list by emailing your request to: mailroom_r3_carson@usda.gov with your request to be added
- Residents and visitors are encouraged to visit the Alerts & Closures page at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/carson/>



Courtesy Photo

- You can check [alerts-notices](#) to see current conditions and closures before venturing out into the forest
- You can check Inciweb at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/> before heading out.

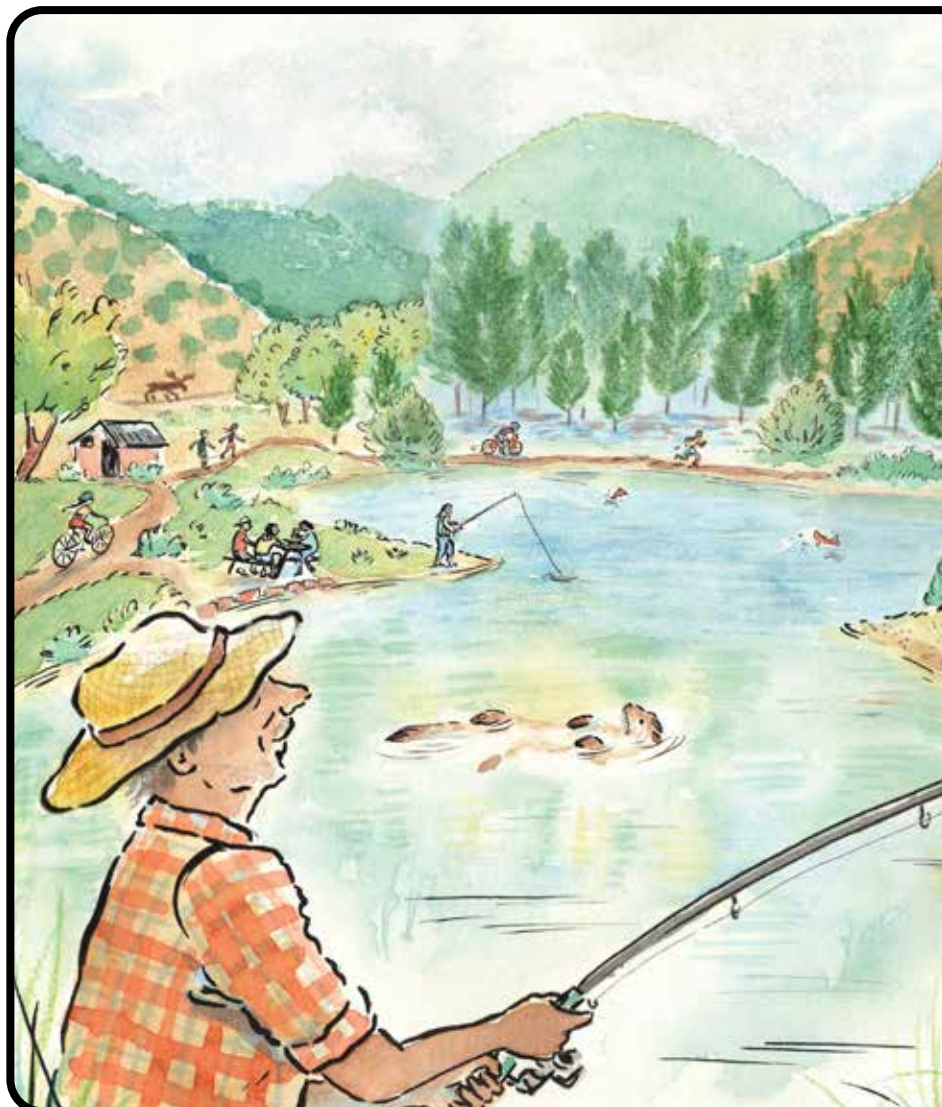
- Operational updates during prescribed fires are posted to InciWeb
- Prescribed fire notices are also posted to forest social media ([facebook.com/CarsonNF](https://www.facebook.com/CarsonNF), twitter.com/CarsonNF)

and New Mexico Fire Information at <https://nmfireinfo.com/>

According to a release sent by Carson National Forest, prescribed fire burns increase forest health and reduce the threat of fire to communities and watersheds. Carson National Forest fuels planners work to determine the exact timing of each project, or the decision to postpone to a later season, depending upon weather, site conditions and available personnel.

The release goes on to note that fire managers, in conjunction with meteorologists, will track dozens of parameters before, during, and after each project to ensure they are conducted safely and monitored until the fires are called out.

“Successful timeframes for these types of projects are a balancing act, which is why it’s entirely possible some or none of these projects move forward this spring,” said Carson National Forest Fire Management Officer Brent Davidson. “The fuels can’t be too wet or too dry, the wind can’t be too strong or too light, the humidity can’t be too high or too low.”



School's (Almost) Out for the Summer!

The start of summer is just around the corner, which means Questa residents will soon enjoy more time outside fishing, hiking, biking, gardening, and grilling with friends and family. **LOR wants to help even more locals enjoy the outdoors this summer**—whether that means creating access to recreational activities for kids, exploring new ways for seniors to connect with nature, or supporting community efforts to care for the environment.

If you have an idea for a project that could help make life in Questa even better, please contact Maria Gonzalez at (575) 665-2001 or maria@lorfoundation.org to learn how LOR can help. *No formal application required.*

Visit our website
lorfoundation.org

Call or text Maria
(575) 665-2001

**BODY
MIND
SPIRIT**



By **BARBARA TRACY**

WATER

Last month we explored the nature and importance of the earth's energies as they relate to our bodies and emotions. This month we are exploring the element of water, a very important part of the function of the human body—without it the body dies. Water can be beautiful to look at in a mountain stream, the ocean, a lake, or in a cold tall glass on a hot summer day. Moving water such as rain or waterfalls emits negative ions that help us to feel lighter and happier. But water can also be stagnated, unclean

and even harmful. Ordinary tap water, especially in large cities, can be harmful due to chemicals used in processing.

The nature of water is movement, allowing itself to pass through and around obstacles along its path. That too is the play of water in our bodies and emotions—movement—the act of nonresistance. Energetically, when water stops flowing in and out like the tide, it becomes stagnant and putrefied. We equate water to our emotions that stem from our reactions to life: When we hold on to our emotional reactions, we become stagnant and can create emotional and physical health problems. It is through our responses to our experiences in life that we establish either allowing or resistance that then can become part of our emotional conditioning. When we allow life to be as it is, we can at the same time look toward making positive changes. When we resist life as it is, we cause our own suffering, due to our reaction of wanting it to be more, better, or

different. Resistance to what is stops the flow of energy, and stagnation sets in. So, when we think of water as it moves, it holds to nothing, it is not attached to anything. Our emotions are the same. When we allow what is, we are free to flow with life. When we resist what is, we become stuck. If we flow like water, we learn to adapt and adjust and to take the path of least resistance.

Water is also a symbol of Love. And when our emotional/water element is balanced, we experience a true expression of deep feelings, natural grace, and flexibility—an ability to nurture others with touch, warmth, understanding and love. When our emotional/water element is out of balance, we will ignore the needs of others and their boundaries. We experience a frozen lack of emotion, warmth, understanding, and love.

Our bodies will not function for long without water. In fact, the amount of water we drink in a day should be paramount in our daily lives as it is a

lifeline to better health. When the body is dehydrated, we can experience several symptoms. Among them are fatigue, dizziness, headaches, brain fog, irritability, spiked blood pressure, dry skin, joint pain, weight gain, kidney bladder disorders and confusion, and damage to organs and systems of the body. There are varied ideas on the amount of water our bodies need in a day. It will obviously depend on each individual and their daily activities. A good rule of thumb to start with is to take your average body weight, divide it in two and equate the answer into ounces.

Open to the flow of life, and do your own investigation into the water element—the quality of the water, the amount of water you need, the various forms of water, such as hydrogenated or alkaline. Treat your emotions and body to the gifts of water with a bath, a cup of tea, a steam bath, or a hot springs soak. Above all, drink a healthy amount of nature's gift: WATER.

SENIOR MENU: MAY 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
All Meals Served With 8oz. 2% Milk as available Taos County Senior Program (575) 737-8927 PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE		1	2	3
		Shredded Chicken & Bean Burrito Calabacitas, Diced Mango & Cantaloupe	Sloppy Joes, Potato Wedges, Diced Tomato, jalapeños, Broccoli, Banana	Tuna Salad Sandwich, Cucumber & Onion Sala, Roasted Brussel sprouts, Fruit Salad
6	7	8	9	10
Beef Goulash, Italian Vegetables, Gelatin w/ Diced pears	Chicken Wrap, 3 bean salad, baby carrots, Sun Chips	Red Chile Beef Enchiladas, Spanish Rice, Pinto Beans, Zucchini, Orange	Chicken Fried Chicken Steak, Mashed Potato/ Gravy, green beans, Wheat roll, Mixed Fruit	Ham & Beans, Green, Red Peppers & Onion, tossed salad w/ Italian Dressing, Cornbread, Strawberry Yogurt
13	14	15	16	17
Green Chile Beef Stew, Tossed Salad Wheat roll, Mandarin oranges	Beach Dog, pasta salad, Broccoli Salad, Pinto beans, slice pineapple upside down cake	Salisbury Steak, Brown Rice w/ Gravy, Wheat roll, Capri Vegetables, Fruit Cocktail, SF Gelatin	Chicken Fajita, Spanish Rice, Spinach, Warm Apple Slices, Light Nonfat Vanilla yogurt	Chef Salad w/Dressing, Crackers, Fruit Salad
20	21	22	23	24
Baked Fish Sandwich, Roasted Herbed Potatoes, Winter Blend Vegetables, Plums	Tamale w/ Red Chile, Pinto Beans, Chateau blend vegetables, Cantaloupe, graham crackers	Green Chile Cheeseburger, Coleslaw, Green Beans, Grapes	Beef and Bean Burrito, Salsa, Yellow squash w/ diced tomatoes, Strawberries w/ Angel Food Cake	Green Chile Chicken Stew, Tortilla, Vegetable medley, pear
27	28	29	30	31
Closed Memorial Day	Macque Choux, Garden Blend Vegetables, Wheat roll, Banana, cherry vanilla yogurt	Chicken Alfredo Penne, Italian Vegetables, Wheat roll, Mixed fruit, Gelatin	Beef Taco Skillet, Green beans, Carrots, Flour Tortilla, Diced Mango	Frito Pie, Lettuce & Tomato, Scandinavian Blend, Watermelon

This Senior Lunch Menu applies to all Senior Centers in Taos County. Meals are cooked fresh at each location.

Lunch donations recommendations are \$1.50 and up. Lunches for people under 60 years old are \$7.50 a person.

To qualify call the Ancianos at (575) 586-0508. They will fill out an assessment and file an application.

Currently, exercise classes are not available.

Donations for transportation is encouraged.



LIVE LOVE LAUGH

by Ellen Wood
a.k.a. Maruška

What's free, releases stress and relieves pain?

Laughter. It also adds joy and zest to your life, eases anxiety and pain, and improves your mood. Same thing happens when you fall in love or enjoy a scrumptious meal.

When you laugh, your body releases hormones and chemicals that have startlingly positive effects on your mind and

body. Not only that, a smile takes fewer muscles than a frown, so what could be better for your face?

When you were a kid, you used to laugh hundreds of times a day, but how often do you laugh now? Do you tend to be more serious and laugh less frequently? Sure, the news is depressing, so take a break from it, watch some funny cat videos and laugh! Or watch the Comedy Channel and allow yourself to laugh and enjoy the present moment.

Your whole body relaxes when you laugh. That's because laughing relieves physical tension and experts say your muscles can stay relaxed for up to 45 minutes after a good, hearty laugh.

When I was a little kid I loved to sit on my mom's fat, jiggle lap and ride the waves of her laughter. And what a wonderful ride it was! Mostly because it meant my mommy was happy and I loved to see her happy.

Laughing out loud or doing something silly or fun or spontaneous on a regular

basis will make you grow younger, feel healthier, and prolong your life. Twenty years ago I had been sliding ungracefully into old age, experiencing early symptoms of Alzheimer's, the person-snatching disease that had claimed my mother (I have the Alzheimer's gene: APO-e4). Then one day I decided to develop a program of daily practices to reverse those symptoms and it proved so successful, I wrote two books about it and began giving talks to share my life-changing techniques. My message over these past several years has expanded from growing younger to thriving and living happy at any age.

Inside each of us is a desire to be fresh and fully alive, to have fun while loving, laughing, and feeling the joy of creating the best life possible for ourselves and others.

So, go on, get silly; laugh a lot to free that inner child. If you have a friend who makes you laugh, spend lots and lots of time with him or her. Live, Love, Laugh! It's good for body and soul.

Ellen Wood of Questa is an award-winning author as well as an artist using the name Maruška. The website for her books and paintings is <https://questacreative.org/ellen-wood/>. Contact Ellen at ellen@howtogrowyounger.com

Ellen Wood Elected to the Board of Trustees of Millicent Rogers Museum

Columnist for *Questa Del Rio News* and *The Taos News*, Ellen Wood, has been elected to the Board of Trustees of Millicent Rogers Museum. Her column in our paper is Live Love Laugh. She is also the author of *The Secret Method for Growing Younger*, Volumes 1 and 2, and edited and participated in *Late Bloomers: The Movement, Literary Gems by Taos Boomers in Their Prime*.

Millicent Rogers Museum is a Blue Star Museum, which has received this recognition for the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families. It is a cultural institution that is working conscientiously to live up to its mission: "To Share and Celebrate the Arts and Culture of the Southwest."

¿Qué es gratis, libera el estrés y alivia el dolor?

La risa. Esta también añade alegría y vitalidad a tu vida, alivia la ansiedad y el dolor y mejora tu estado de ánimo. Lo mismo sucede cuando te enamoras o disfrutas de una comida muy sabrosa.

Cuando ríes, tu cuerpo libera hormonas y sustancias químicas que tienen efectos positivos sorprendentes en la mente y el cuerpo. Y no solo eso, una sonrisa requiere menos músculos que un ceño fruncido, así que ¿cuál podría ser mejor para tu rostro?

Cuando eras niño, seguro que reías cientos de veces al día, pero ¿con qué frecuencia ríes ahora? ¿Tienes a estar más serio y a reír menos frecuentemente? Claro, las noticias son deprimentes, así que tómate un descanso, mira algunos videos graciosos de gatos ¡y ríete! O mira el Canal de Comedias y date permiso para reír y disfrutar del momento presente.

Todo tu cuerpo se relaja cuando te ríes. Eso se debe a que la risa alivia la tensión física, y los expertos dicen que los músculos pueden permanecer relajados hasta 45 minutos después de una buena carcajada.

Cuando era una niña pequeña, me encantaba sentarme en el regazo gordo y acogedor de mi mamá y montarme en las olas de su risa. ¡Y qué paseo tan maravilloso era! Sobre todo, porque aquello significaba que mi mamá estaba feliz y a mí me encan-

taba verla feliz.

Reír en voz alta o hacer algo tonto, divertido o espontáneo de manera regular te ayudará a rejuvenecer, a sentirte más saludable y a prolongar tu vida. Hace veinte años, yo me deslizaba de manera poco elegante hacia la vejez, y experimentaba síntomas tempranos de Alzheimer, la enfermedad que me había arrebatado a mi madre (tengo el gen del Alzheimer: APO-e4). Entonces, un día decidí desarrollar un programa de prácticas diarias para revertir esos síntomas y resultó ser tan exitoso que escribí dos libros sobre este tema y comencé a dar charlas para compartir las técnicas que cambiaron mi vida. Mi mensaje en estos últimos años ha pasado de rejuvenecer a prosperar y vivir feliz a cualquier edad.

Dentro de cada uno de nosotros existe el deseo de sentirnos renovados y de vivir a

plenitud, de divertirnos mientras amamos, reímos y sentimos la alegría de crear la mejor vida posible para nosotros y los demás.

Así que adelante, actúa a lo tonto; riéte mucho para liberar a ese niño interior. Si entre tus amistades hay alguien que te hace reír, pasa mucho, mucho tiempo con esa persona. ¡Vive, Ama, Ríe! Es bueno para el

cuerpo y para el alma.

Ellen Wood de Questa es una autora galardonada y una artista que usa el nombre de Maruška. El sitio web de sus libros y pinturas es <https://questacreative.org/ellen-wood/>. Para ponerte en contacto con Ellen escríbele a ellen@howtogrowyounger.com

Traducción de Teresa Dovalpage

MAY BLESSINGS JR (Malaquias) says:



May your car always start.

May your brakes always work.

May your wiper blades always be fresh and new.

May your engine fluids always be topped off.

We'll help keep your car running well.
May the Good Lord always bless you.



575-586-0561 • 2460 State Road 522, Questa NM

Ellen Wood Elegida para la Junta Directiva del Museo Millicent Rogers

La columnista de *Questa Del Rio News* y *The Taos News* Ellen Wood ha sido elegida para la Junta Directiva del Museo Millicent Rogers. Su columna en nuestro periódico se titula Vive Ama Ríe. También es autora de *The Secret Method for Growing Younger*, Volumes 1 and 2, y editó y participó en *Late Bloomers: The Movement, Literary Gems by Taos Boomers in Their Prime*.

El Museo Millicent Rogers es un Museo Estrella Azul, que ha recibido este reconocimiento de la Fundación Nacional para las Artes y las Familias Estrella Azul. Es una institución cultural que trabaja concienzudamente para cumplir con su misión: "Compartir y Celebrar las Artes y la Cultura del Suroeste."



I DARE YOU

By MARTA GLOVER

Changes Happen

I cannot write the column without mentioning May first, May Day, the Gaelic May Day festival, marking the beginning of summer and open pasturing. It is traditionally held on the first of May, midway between the spring equinox and summer solstice. In Irish the name for the festival is La' Bealtaine, in Scottish Gaelic, Latha Bealtainn and in Manx Gaelic, Laa Boaltinn/Boaldyn. It is a celebration of the time of light and growth to come. The lighting of the Beltane fires provided an opportunity to cleanse and renew the conditions of a community through the growing power of the sun. All household fires would be doused and then re-lit from the Beltane bonfire, followed by a feast. Dancing around the maypole and hanging flowers on neighbors' doors are other ways of celebrating the day. Beltane is a time to connect with the beauty and magic of nature and to celebrate new beginnings. Celebrate the light and be the Light for yourself and others. May we also remember our

veterans on Memorial Day.

My column this month is about life changing events and how they affect you. Often life changing events are sudden and happen quickly; they are something we cannot prepare for. It can be a loss that we are not able to protect and or to save. Have you ever tried to protect something that was important to you? Did you advocate to protect it? Did it physically hurt your heart to witness the situation? Was it a change beyond your control? This can happen when your environment is altered or affected by human or natural causes. It can shake up your stability and peace of mind. It can be a life changing event that calls you to advocate for its welfare and longevity. Oftentimes it can be a loss, a time of grieving. Sudden changes initially can create pain and frustration, causing one to react before seeing the whole picture or believing in a different future.

Has this happened to you in your life when you felt the call to advocate for a cause beyond your control? How did you do it? How did you feel during the process and afterwards? Did you dare to address it, voice it, and solve it?

MKG:

I tried to protect a piece of land that wasn't mine but for decades has been open ground and a corridor to wildlife. A pristine view with nature in her truest form, an undisturbed setting I was able to observe daily. It hurt me to watch

this environment being changed and it messed with my privacy and peace of mind. So what did I do? I could not stop the process, the only avenue open to me was to change myself and how I was dealing with it. Instead of screaming and reacting, I addressed it and voiced it and worked to negotiate a mutual plan of acceptance both parties could agree upon. Did it solve my problem, no not really, but with respectful communication, it made everything easier and more fluid in the transition. Next time I will look for communication ahead of time and dare to be proactive in my well-being and in my living environment by using grace instead of anger. I had to change with the change going on around me. I dared myself to look deeper within.

Henry Tobmen:

My mom let my friend take my brand new bike on the dirt road. My friend never should have been riding the bike, it was too big for him, so he recklessly tumbled over and scratched the bike. I felt really angry and disrespected. I voiced and addressed the situation through verbal explosion. I solved it by daring to make massive boundaries for my friends in the future. We will see how that goes.

Healing Jean:

I was an advocate to stop Monsanto from sending genetically modified food grade products and seeds to Pioneer

Valley in Amherst, Massachusetts. That was 20 years ago. Vermont was a state that was renowned for not allowing the Monsanto seeds to be planted in their agricultural regions. I went to court to try to outlaw GMO seeds from being planted in Amherst, Massachusetts. I lost by 100 votes against me and 60 votes for me. The dare is to have your ducks in place ahead of time. I met with all the farmers in Vermont and used the research in court. Mono-cropping hurts the ecosystem. It is to our benefit to preserve our ecosystem.

Josie:

I risked advocating and standing out for the good of equal rights for gay people in Denver, Colorado. I was standing up for a legislate to be passed for human rights. This was one of the biggest rallies held in the West. Amendment 2 was a ballot initiative passed by Colorado voters in 1992 that prohibited the state from enacting antidiscrimination protections for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. Voters in the state of Colorado set in motion a legal and constitutional fight when they approved Amendment 2. I have advocated for people all my life. I spoke with no fear for the gay issue. No fear when it comes to others. I don't go small when I advocate. Any time we stand up for another person, that's who we really are. Thousands of people that day were at the Capitol in Denver, all supporting LGBTQ.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

By DAWN PROVENCHER



Choosing Your Tribe

There are many old sayings about choosing those you associate with:

You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with. Show me who you associate with and I will show you your future. You can't soar with eagles if you associate with turkeys. It's better to be alone than be in bad company. Choose people who believe in you and you will believe in yourself.

One bad apple...

You may know others with the same meaning. Our mothers knew them because they were always encouraging us to choose friends we were proud to be around. My mother referred to it as "choosing your tribe." Kipling wrote in "The Jungle Book" ...the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack. To be a strong wolf, we must have a strong pack surrounding us. And to be a member of a strong pack, we must be strong wolves.

If everyone's mother knows this, why do we need to be reminded? Throughout our lives, we make choices daily that will affect us in important ways, sometimes for the rest of our life. I am writing this from Poland, where our son just got married. As they recited vows (in English and in Polish!), the importance of these choices were beautifully illustrated. "You help me find joy in the simplest

things, like eating a blueberry," and "You push me when I need a push and you hold me back when I need to slow down." Clearly these two understood the meaning of the sayings quoted above.

So how can we make such a choice, especially when we may not know a person well? After meeting someone you might want to spend more time with, ask yourself: How do they speak about other people? How do they speak about themselves? How do they spend their time? Are they positive and happy? Do they encourage others? Do they share some interests with you? Do they have interests you would like to share? Are they curious about things you like? Do they try hard at school or work? Do they have good habits you wish you had? Those are the people you want in your pack, in your tribe.

When I talked with college-bound high school students, I encouraged them

to join activities they enjoyed, because there they would find others with the same likes and dislikes. Like to read? join a book club. It sounds simplistic, but not only are you doing something you enjoy, you will be surrounded by people who feel the same. Sometimes, however, we find ourselves paired with a classmate, a coworker, a neighbor, or even a relative without a choice. All of us can sit next to someone, work alongside someone, share a holiday with someone, and not allow them to influence us. Not allow them to "be in our tribe," as my mother would have said. In order to draw these lines, we must always be working on knowing who we are and what direction we are wanting to go.

Whether we are off to kindergarten or to the senior center, our journey continues. In order to be the best version of ourselves, we will always benefit from soaring with eagles.

FOR MORE NEWS, PHOTOS & EVENT INFO VISIT QUESTANEWS.COM

This Self-Care Tool is a Game Changer



By CONTRIBUTING WRITER
MONIQUE PARKER

If you have chronically tight muscles and/or a weak core, I'd like to introduce you to a simple, effective, inexpensive, portable, and powerful self-care tool that I've been using professionally as a yoga therapist for 25 years. It has saved me personally a number of times: rehabbing after injury (e.g. motorcycle accident, falling on ice), as well as with repetitive-use (chronically repeated movements) and under-use (such as prolonged sitting) activities. It is the Foam Roller and the technique is called "Self-Myofascial Release." It is what I consider to be "The Magic Tool in the Self-Care Toolbox."

Many of us would benefit from—and may not be able to afford—regular massage to release tight muscles. As well, stretching isn't always enough to release muscular knots: Think of a knot in a sock—you can keep stretching each end, but the knot in the middle only gets tighter. So how to deactivate knots in the connective tissue and chronically tight muscles to ease pain, improve range of motion, and even improve circulation and posture?

Think of grandma's delicious and beautiful homemade tortillas: She likely used a small wood rolling pin called a bolillo and applied pressure as she was rolling out the dough. Same with the foam roller. In this case, think of your fascia—all that connective tissue that surrounds your organs, bones and muscles—as the dough. However, our "dough" (or fascia) often becomes tight, restricted, and bulky.

Using a foam roller, with your own body weight and desired pressure (coupled with mindful awareness and breathing), you can break down soft tissue adhesions or "trigger points" to help your body to relax and function

better. As well, you can use the roller to stretch hard-to-reach muscles and strengthen your core (abdominal muscles), which are so important for a healthy posture.

Like people, foam rollers come in all shapes and sizes, but from my experience, my clients and I have preferred the smooth high density rollers to the hard textured rollers because they distribute pressure more evenly, are affordable (about \$20) and the pressure is not as intense. I also prefer the 3-foot by 6-inch long rollers because you can do so many more exercises with them.

Monique Parker, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500 is a Yoga Therapist and Teacher of Vedic Chanting. She co-founded the Yoga Teacher Certification Program at UNM-Taos, where she will be offering "Yoga for Wellness" this fall. From 2014-2020 she owned Taos Yoga Therapy where she helped people of all ages and fitness levels incorporate personalized yoga tools and healing modalities into their wellness journeys. She has lived in Questa for twenty-one years.

MAY 19

1:00 -3:00 p.m.

2-hour Self-Massage Roller Workshop at Yoga Sala in Questa

We will use mindful awareness, breathing, and sound (even laughing, which is so healing and helps to let go of tension!) coupled with rolling, stretching, and core exercises to give you a magic self-care tool that you can use at home. Bring your own 3' x 6" roller or purchase one at Yoga Sala. Workshop is \$25-\$35 on a sliding scale. Pre-registration appreciated. Contact: (575) 613-0519 or email info@moniqueparkerstudios.com. Yoga Sala is located at 2331 Highway 522 in Questa.



CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY TO BUSINESS RESOURCES, TRAINING, AND SERVICES

AT THE QUESTA PUBLIC LIBRARY

MAY WORKSHOPS

MAY 22

**Wednesday
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM**

Introduction to Entrepreneurship

with Ayla Parker

Entrepreneurship will be analyzed, debated, assessed, and explored.

In Person at the
Questa Public Library

FREE



Register

MAY 23

**Thursday
10:30 AM - 12 PM**

How to Start a business

with Anwar Kaelin and Christopher Garcia!

Learn the 13 basic steps every person should know before starting a business.

In Person (Hybrid)
at the Questa Public Library

FREE



Register

MAY 29

**Wednesday
5:30 P - 7:00 PM**

Starting your Business Journey

with Ayla Parker

Explore the why, what, and how of starting your business journey.

In Person at the
Questa Public Library

FREE



Register



Congratulations Questa Wildcat Graduates!



**2420 St. Hwy 522 - Questa, NM 87556
575.586.0419**

ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson
MAY 2024

THE MISSION OF PLUTO

“In the midst of darkness, light persists.” —Mahatma Ghandi

We have mentioned in past columns that we are building up to the year 2025, long predicted to be a turning point in human history. Pluto is symbolic of and part of this struggle. This is our slowest moving planet, staying in a single sign for many years. It is therefore called a generational planet as opposed to a personal planet. It is the planetary ruler of Pisces, the age we are leaving. Pluto is currently in the sign of Aquarius; therefore it is literally the bridge between the Age of Pisces and the Age of Aquarius. Pluto is the Greek god of the underworld, whom the Romans called Hades. He rules such things as volcanoes and earthquakes, both physical and metaphorical. Things can be hidden, soiled, dark and secretive when Pluto is direct. Of course, sometimes secrets are positive, such as when providing sanctuary or when clothing nakedness, which Pluto also rules.

This month Pluto goes retrograde for its final dance back into Capricorn by September, and we could say this is the last gasp of the Piscean age. When Pluto goes retrograde, secrets are revealed, the darkness is lightened and the unconscious becomes more conscious. In the sign of Aquarius, blind faith is cast aside in favor of knowledge. We can use this time in positive ways, enjoining friends and groups to remember that we are all One, a mantra for the Age of Aquarius. Capricorn is the sign of sorrow and suffering, of long-term karma, but also of Initiation. Pluto has been in this sign for the last 16 years while mankind has struggled, one foot ahead of the other, up the mountain of karma. It will turn direct again near the end of this year and finally re-enter Aquarius for good in November, at which point we will be firmly into the Age of Aquarius, the age of humanity. It will remain in this sign until March of 2043, instigating what we hope and wish will be a New Age for All incorporating tolerance for different beliefs and lifeways.

Everyone: Use Pluto's retrograding energy for discerning truth and disallowing divisive rhetoric.

ARIES ♈ Planet: Mercury ♀ MARCH 20 – APRIL 19

Dynamic: Time to place your values on the line.

Direction: Know them.

Soul Thought: Do you?

TAURUS ♉ Planet: Vulcan ♁ APRIL 19 – MAY 20

Dynamic: You may be trying to hold on too tightly to a favorite idea or ideal.

Direction: Examine with an open mind.

Soul Thought: “When you change the way you look at things the things you look at change.” —Max Planck

GEMINI ♊ Planet: Venus ♀ MAY 20 – July 20

Dynamic: This is a good month for you in finances and love.

Direction: From the Soul's perspective.

Soul Thought: What is good for the Soul is not always appreciated by the personality.

CANCER ♋ Planet: Neptune ♆ July 20 – JULY 22

Dynamic: You remain fairly stable, if sometimes in the dark.

Direction: Grow cat's eyes.

Soul Thought: Good work can be done in the dark.

LEO ♌ Planet: Sun ☉ JULY 22 – AUG 22

Dynamic: An opportunity to shift from a favored belief to a new idea.

Direction: Examine carefully.

Soul Thought: “Think for yourself and allow others the privilege of doing so too.” —Voltaire

VIRGO ♍ Planet: Moon ☾ AUG 22 – SEPT 22

Dynamic: Your time in the Sun may seem over.

Direction: Use what you learned.

Soul Thought: Or did you just wear funny glasses?

LIBRA ♎ Planet: Uranus ♁ SEPT 22 – OCT 22

Dynamic: This is still a good time for growing finances.

Direction: Get a bigger box!

Soul Thought: Then use the results well.

SCORPIO ♏ Planet: Mars ♂ OCT 22 – NOV 21

Dynamic: Vision and energy abound this month.

Direction: Conquer but do not divide.

Soul Thought: “Our mistakes don't limit us, only our fears do. The only thing stopping you is you.” —Maya Varga

SAGITTARIUS ♐ Planet: Earth ♁ NOV 21 – DEC 20

Dynamic: Shifting from high passion to high aspirations.

Direction: But you may need to pick just one target.

Soul Thought: When the many become one.

CAPRICORN ♑ Planet: Saturn ♄ DEC 20 – JAN 19

Dynamic: It's been a long time of feeling alone.

Direction: Don't get cold feet.

Soul Thought: What are your metaphorical socks?

AQUARIUS ♒ Planet: Jupiter ♃ JAN 19 – FEB 18

Dynamic: You've been stuck for a while.

Direction: Reach out to another.

Soul Thought: When two become many.

PISCES ♓ Planet: Pluto ♇ FEB 18 – MAR 20

Dynamic: The light is here.

Direction: Hope.

Soul Thought: Humanity is on the line.



By J. ORTEGA

ROAD HOUSE (2024)

Starring: Jake Gyllenhaal, Daniela Melchior, Connor McGregor, Billy Magnussen

RATED R.

Steaming on Amazon Prime Video

First Impression: “Road House” is a remake of the popular campy 1980s film by the same name that starred the late Patrick Swayze. Although it may be nostalgia-inducing for some, it is a painfully bland, pitiful, and soulless remake that is as paint-by-the-numbers as action films can possibly get.

The dictionary definition of nostalgia is as follows: “a sentimental, longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal associations.” And that, ladies and gentlemen, is the biggest problem with Hollywood today. The big studios have fallen in love with nostalgia. This has led to so many reboots, remakes, reimaginings and just plain rip-offs of older films that audiences held in high regard. It's gotten to the point that Hollywood is now starting to remake bad films, and that's the case with this one.

If you happened to watch the original “Road House” from 1989 in the theater or on television, you would have come away with this opinion: this is not a good movie, this is a movie that's so bad that it's good. It's a guilty pleasure film from the decade of excess and hair metal. It is a showcase for Patrick Swayze to kick ass and take names, where the story and dialogue take a back seat, and that's fine as long as we all know it's that kind of film.

So, when I saw that the Jeff Bezos streamer was going to remake such a beloved cult classic, I had my doubts about the quality and reasoning to remake it. Well, it appears greed and the lack of (or belief in) the creativity of new ideas are the driving force for why the film was made.

The new movie does try a little bit to play to young people, by including

cameos by Post Malone; and to UFC fans, by introducing us to the hilarious but probably unintended acting style of the one and only Connor McGregor. There's also a nod to fans of the underrated FX tv show “Mayans,” when JD Pardo shows up as the head of a much less intimidating biker gang as well.

But probably the biggest surprise of the new film is the inclusion of Jake Gyllenhaal in the Patrick Swayze role. It's a little bizarre that an actor who's viewed as an A-lister in Hollywood would be in this second-rate disaster. But who am I to judge? Gyllenhaal was probably a big fan of the original, so nostalgia probably played a role in his doing the movie as well.

Some other notable changes are the location of the Roadhouse bar, which doesn't have a name, per se. I'm not sure if that was intentional or the bar name in the original film, “The Double Deuce” simply couldn't be beat, but in this film it's simply known as “The Roadhouse.”

The new movie is set in the Florida Keys where lawlessness and “Florida” shenanigans can run wild. Other than these few cosmetic changes, the story characters and, surprisingly, the action are very bland, and this factor was the most disappointing—these should have been the one area in which the film would go all out.

Nostalgia... it's nice in theory but Hollywood proves again and again it stinks in practice.

Final verdict ½ star out of 5



To discover your Rising Sign, or for more information, contact Charlene R. Johnson, www.SkyDanceAstrology.com, or email: SkyDance@SkyDanceAstrology.com

Esoteric Astrology is focused on the rising sign more than the sun sign (we suggest you read both) and provides clarity, direction and answers for those seeking a higher level of life.

FOR MORE NEWS, PHOTOS & EVENT INFO VISIT QUESTANEWS.COM

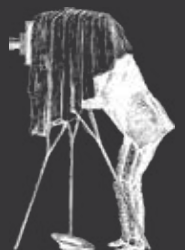
Featured Photo May 2024



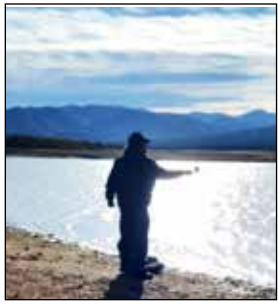
Photo by Gaea McGahee

You may have seen these goats in Gaea's car (yes car) driving around town and at Yoga Sala. Meet Zephyr (top left), Haboob (middle) and Srocco (bottom right).

Email your photo submissions to GraphicsDept@QuestaNews.com or Editor@QuestaNews.com



OBITUARIES



Alejandro Cordova
d. March 27, 2024

Alejandro Cordova, 66, a resident of Costilla, passed away unexpectedly on March 27, 2024. He is preceded in death by his parents, Abenancio and Victoria Cordova, sister Elizabeth Medina, his in-laws Ruben and Frutosa Martinez, and his brother-in-law Ruben Martinez. Alejandro was a logging truck driver since his early teen years. He loved and enjoyed what he did every day. His passion was especially spending time with his family and his pride and joy his grandchildren. In his spare time, he enjoyed going fishing and planting his amazing gardens every year. He is survived by his wife, Louise Cordova; his daughters Alexandria Martinez (Mario), RaeAnn Cordova (Lance), and Andrieka Cordova (Ryan); grandchildren Malaya Martinez, D'Marco Martinez, Anita Romero, Joseph Romero, Daniella Cordova, and Jaydon Bumphrey; his step-grandchild, Jagger Little; his in-laws Tony Martinez (Lorraine), Violanda Romo (Albert) and Margaret Martinez. Plus, many other loving relatives and friends. Rosary was recited on Thursday, April 4, 2024 followed by the Mass of Christian burial at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Costilla. Burial followed at the Arroyo Seco Cemetery.



Gasper Miera
d. April 10, 2024

With great sadness, we the family of Gasper Miera 63 of Questa, NM announce that he passed away at home peacefully in his sleep on Wednesday April 10, 2024. He was born on September 24, 1960 to Joe E. Miera Sr. and Mary Miera in Pueblo, CO. He grew up in Amalia, NM then relocated to Questa during his teen years. Gasper is preceded in death by his beloved son Jerome, Mother Mary, Tia Delia & Tio Elfido Vigil, In-laws Euphrocina & Abel Montoya, brother-in-law Casimiro Montoya and recently niece Yvonne Maes and brother-in-law Daniel Martinez. He is survived by his wife Cindy Miera; daughter Enrica Renee Garcia (Vincent III), son Joel Miera (Vanessa Garcia); grandchildren Alexia Garcia, Athena Garcia, Vincent Garcia IV, Alita Garcia, Abrielle Miera, Danielle Miera, their mom (Brittney Maes), Brandon LaCome and Danielle LaCome; his dad Joe Miera, Sr; brother David Miera (Leotta) and sisters, Peggy Bazan (Benny), Helen Martinez and Amanda Leon; and many more family and friends. Rosary will be recited at 6:00pm Thursday, April 25, 2024 led by the Hermanos from Amalia in the Evergreen Chapel of DeVargas Funeral Home of Taos. Christian Services will be on Saturday, April 27, 2024 at 11:00am at Living Word Ministries in Questa, NM. Burial will follow via motorcycle procession to El Pueblito Cemetery. A gratitude meal will follow at Questa VFW following the services. Thank you for all your Love, Prayers, and Support during this difficult time from Cindy, Enrica & Joel Miera, God Bless You!



Reyes Garduno
d. April 5, 2024

Reyes Felix Garduno "RFG" Reyes was born March 29, 1947, in Arroyo Hondo, Taos County, New Mexico to Leontino and Adela Garduno. He grew up in Arroyo Hondo and graduated from Taos High School in 1967. In 1968, Reyes was drafted into the U. S. Army and was a Vietnam War veteran. In 1974, Reyes married his wife of 50 years, Gail. Together they had two sons, Leon and Adam Garduno. Reyes was a meat cutter by trade and worked at King Soopers in Colorado for 30 years. He retired in 2007. While retired, Reyes split his time between his two homes in Arroyo Hondo, NM and Commerce City, CO. Reyes enjoyed spending time with family, fishing, hunting, building things made of wood, and most of all, driving his 1976 Ford F-100 pickup truck, "The Black Widow." Reyes is survived by his wife, Gail Garduno, son Leon Garduno, grandchildren Alexis and Jacob "JJ" Garduno; son Adam (Elizabeth) Garduno, grandchildren Alexander, William, and Isabella Garduno; brothers Paul and Clyde Garduno; sisters Dorothy Duran, Dora Holmes, and Connie Miera. He is preceded in death by both parents, three sisters: Tita Morgas, Felia Raju, and Brenda Sandoval, and his brother Sabino Vigil.

SAFETY BILL cont'd from page 21

Additionally, she signed bills she said increase accountability for violent acts. One keeps people locked up when they are accused of a second felony while awaiting trial for a first until their original judge can weigh in. The other increases penalties for second-degree murder and attempted second-degree murder.

"They need to be in a corrections system long enough to make sure that we stop this cycle of individuals committing these crimes," she said.

However, according to a brief by the Vera Institute of Justice, higher rates of incarceration have only a "minimal impact" on

reducing crime, and the relationship has gotten even weaker over time.

Despite the four new laws, the governor said she'll continue fighting for more—maybe even before the lawmakers are set to reconvene next year.

"I'm still leaning on calling a special session," she said.

If she did, she said her priority would be to resurrect two failed bills in particular. One would limit panhandling, criminalizing certain solicitations characterized as "aggressive." The other would rework how a defendant is deemed competent to stand trial. If a person were evaluated to be both incompetent and dangerous, they would be ordered into behavioral health treatment.



Courtesy Photo

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signs a bill instituting a 7-day waiting period for gun purchases flanked by sponsor Rep. Andrea Romero and members of Student Demand Action on March 4, 2024. (Photo by Nash Jones / KUNM)

Questa del Rio News sends their sincerest condolences to all who are mourning the loss of their beloved. May you find comfort and peace in your coming days.





Elevate Your Lunch Break With Salads!

As the sun stretches its rays longer into the day, our cravings for refreshing and satisfying salads soar to new heights! Whether you're basking in the outdoors on a picnic blanket or tackling tasks indoors with a trusty reusable container by your side, our enchanting salad recipes promise to elevate your midday meal experience. Because whether you're savoring a leisurely lunch break or powering through tasks, you deserve nothing short of the finest flavors of summer.

Chopped Salad with Green Chile

Recipe courtesy of "She Likes Food"

Ingredients

- 4 c chopped green cabbage
- 4 c chopped romaine lettuce
- 1 (15-oz) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 c corn kernels (fresh, frozen or canned)
- 1/2 red onion, diced
- 1 c fire-roasted green chili, with most of the liquid drained out
- 3/4 c cotija cheese, or queso fresca or feta cheese
- 1 c diced tomato
- 1 medium size avocado, diced
- 1/2 c chopped cilantro

Dressing

- 1/3 c olive oil
- Juice of two limes, 1/4 c, more if desired
- 1/2 t curmin, more if desired
- 1 or 2 cloves garlic, minced or grated
- 1 t pure maple syrup
- 1 t Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Add all dressing ingredients to a jar and mix until completely combined. Give the dressing a taste and add more seasonings if desired.

Add the chopped cabbage and romaine lettuce to a large bowl and mix together. Next, add all the remaining salad ingredients and mix together well. You can either dress the entire bowl of salad if bringing to a party or potluck, or you can serve individual portions of salad and each person can dress their own salad



If you have a recipe you would like featured in an upcoming issue of Enchanted Eats, please submit to assistanteditor@questanews.com

Vegan Santa Fe Salad

Recipe courtesy of "The Healthy Foodie"

- 4 c chopped romaine lettuce
- 3 c corn kernels, thawed, canned or fresh (drain well if applicable)*
- 1 dry pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 15-oz can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 c sliced red onion
- 1/2 c chopped cilantro
- 1 avocado, sliced
- Vinaigrette
- 1/3 c avocado oil
- Grated zest and juice of 2 limes
- 2T maple syrup
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 t salt (I use Himalayan salt)
- 1/2 t ground cumin
- 1/2 t chipotle powder
- Optional Garnish
- Lime wedges
- Crushed tortilla chips

Place the lettuce, corn, tomatoes, black beans, red onion and chopped cilantro in a large mixing bowl.

Next, combine all the ingredients for the vinaigrette in a small measuring cup and whisk until well combined and slightly emulsified. Pour over the salad and toss delicately to combine.

Serve immediately or place in the fridge for about an hour to allow flavors to meld.

When ready to serve, top with the sliced avocado and garnish with a handful of crushed corn tortillas as well as a few lime wedges, if desired.

Avacado Salad

Recipe Courtesy of "Cooking Classy"

Ingredients

- 1 medium (12 oz) English cucumber, cut into quarters through the length, then sliced
- 16 oz grape tomatoes*
- 1/2 small red onion,** sliced into small pieces
- 2 medium avocados (firm but ripe), sliced into bite-size pieces

Dressing

- 1-1/2 T fresh lemon juice***
- 1-1/2 T red wine vinegar
- 3-1/2 T extra virgin olive oil
- 1 t honey
- 1-1/2 t minced garlic
- 1/4 c chopped cilantro
- 1/4 c chopped parsley
- 1/2 t dried oregano
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

For the dressing: In a small mixing bowl whisk together lemon juice, red wine vinegar, extra virgin oil oil, honey, garlic, cilantro, parsley, oregano, and season with salt and pepper to taste.

In a large bowl gently toss together cucumbers, tomatoes, red onion, and avocado with dressing.

Photo Courtesy of Cooking Classy

Avacado Salad

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR • MAY 2024

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE!

Taos County Lodger's Tax Grant Applications Open through May 15th, to apply and for more info: www.taoscounty.org/478/Lodgers-Tax-Grant-Program

APRIL 30: TUE 3 - 4:30 PM
Sueños del Coyote at UNM Taos, 1157 County Road 110, Ranchos de Taos. Sueños del Coyote: the Emergence of Genizaros in the Nuevo Mexicano Imagination. Dr. Lamadrid will delve into the cultural significance of Genizaros in literature, folklore, and music. Info: call (575) 737-6215

MAY 1: WED 6 PM
Questa Independent School Board Meeting at QISD Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A. Info: call (575) 586-0421

6:30 PM
Open Door Night of Worship at Living Word Ministries, 12 Llano Rd, Questa. Come join us for an Open Door Night of Worship. Info: lwmsite.org, or call (575) 613-8010

MAY 4: SAT 2 - 4 PM
Women's Spa Day Out at Living Word Ministries, 12 Llano Rd, Questa. Hair cuts, massages, hand massages & waxing, foot massages & soaks, make-overs! Come relax amidst diffused biblical oils. Info: lwmsite.org, or call (575) 613-8010

4 PM
Holy Moments, A Women's Gathering at Living Word Ministries, 12 Llano Rd, Questa. Come into the Kings Chambers Appetizer Reception, Worship & Guest Speaker: Rebecca Chavez. Info: lwmsite.org, or call (575) 613-8010

MAY 5: SUN
Feliz Cinco de Mayo

10 - 11 AM
You are My Sunshine Sunday! At Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. Mommy & Baby Yoga with Jiwanshakti. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

1 - 2:30 PM
Growing Microgreens & Sprouts Workshop at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. Facilitated by Kenny LaCome, Certified Living Foods Health Educator, with over 3 decades of experience growing sprouts and microgreens as a lifestyle for ultimate health. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

MAY 6: MON 6:00 PM
Questa Economic Development Fund Board Meeting in person at the Questa Visitor Center, 1 Hwy 38, or via Zoom. For agenda, Zoom link, and info: call (575) 586-2149

MAY 7: TUE 3 - 4:30 PM
Acequia History, Culture, and Ecology in Taos at UNM Taos, 1157 County Road 110, Ranchos de Taos. Professor Emerita of Anthropology Sylvia Rodríguez, a native Taosña and esteemed anthropologist, will guide us through a journey of discovery, drawing on images and maps to explore the intricate web of acequias in Taos. Info: call (575) 737-6215

MAY 8: WED 5 - 7 PM
Agriculture Co-op Roundtable presentation by the Arrowhead Research Center of NM State University, sponsored by the QEDF. Join us for dinner and a community discussion about a local Ag Coop Model. At the Village of Questa Council Chambers, 2500 Old State Rd 3 in Questa. Info: lynn@questaedf.com or call (575) 586-2149

MAY 10: FRI 10 AM - NOON
Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry, 140 Embargo Rd. Info: questafoodpantry.org, or call (575) 586-0486

1 PM
Twirl Steam Play at Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. Can you drop an egg off the roof and have it land without cracking? Join Twirl as we explore physics with the egg drop challenge! A program for elementary-aged children and their families. Info: email library@villageofquesta.org, or call (575) 586-2023

MAY 11: SAT NOON - 4 PM
High Desert Hounds Mother's Day Fundraiser at Cid's Food Market, 623 Paseo Del Pueblo Norte, Taos. Plants, seeds, flowers and more. Info: HDH@localogy.org, or call (469) 644-8323

MAY 12: SUN
Happy Mother's Day!

MAY 14: TUE 6 PM
Village of Questa Town Council Meeting at Questa Village Town Hall, 2500 Old State Rd 3. For agenda and info: questa-nm.com/village-council-meeting-agenda, or call (575) 586-0694

MAY 15: WED 6 PM
Questa Independent School Board Meeting at QISD Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A. Info: call (575) 586-0421

NOON - 4 PM
In-person, one-on-one, business advising in Questa at Questa Visitor Center, 1 NM-38. With Anwar Kaelin, Director of the Small Business Development Center at UNM-Taos. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL for anyone in any stage of business, anyone with a great idea. Make an appointment by visiting: calendly.com/sbdctaos

5 PM
Cerro VFW Post #9516 Monthly Meeting at Cerro VFW, 108 NM Highway 378, Questa. Info: call (575) 586-2352

MAY 18: SAT
Congratulations Questa High School Graduates!

2 - 4 PM
The Art of Acequias & Cultural Landscape of the Northern Rio Grande at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. Questa Public Library presents Scott Sutton and his interactive display: The Art of Acequias & Cultural Landscape of the Northern Rio Grande. Find your acequia and understand its source, where it travels to, where it's been and its history. Info: email pegtrigg@gmail.com, visit questalibrary.org/category/library-exhibits, or call (575) 586-2023

MAY 19: SUN 10 - 11 AM
You are My Sunshine Sunday! At Yoga Sala. Mommy & Baby Yoga with Jiwanshakti. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

1 - 3 PM
Self-Massage Roller Workshop at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. Self-Massage Roller: The Magic Tool for Self-Care Workshop with Monique Parker \$25-\$35 sliding scale. If you have chronically tight muscles or a weak core, this 2-hour introductory workshop offers a simple, effective, and inexpensive self-care tool. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

MAY 20: MON 3 - 5 PM
Questa Library Book Club at Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road. Join the conversation! Our May focus is on CRIME books, your choice! Info: email library@villageofquesta.org, or call (575) 586-2023

MAY 22: WED 5 - 7 PM
Free Introduction to Entrepreneurship Workshop with Ayla Parker in person at the Questa Business Bridge, located at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road. Entrepreneurship will be analyzed, debated, assessed and explored. To register and for info: call (575) 586-2149

MAY 23: THUR
20th Annual Questa Healing Fields Veteran's Flag Display Hwy 522 in Questa

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Free How to start a Business Workshop with SBDC Director, Anwar Kaelin. In person at the Questa Business Bridge, located at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road. Learn the 13 basic steps every person should know before starting a business. To register and for info: call (575) 586-2149

MAY 24: FRI
20th Annual Questa Healing Fields Veteran's Flag Display Hwy 522 in Questa

10 AM - NOON
Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry, 140 Embargo Rd. Info: questafoodpantry.org, or call (575) 586-0486

10 AM - 3 PM
Questa Visitor Center opens for the summer, Wednesday - Sunday each week through Sunday, October 6. Located at the traffic light at 1 NM-Hwy 38. For info: call (575) 586-2149

MAY 25: SAT
20th Annual Questa Healing Fields Veteran's Flag Display Hwy 522 in Questa

MAY 26: SUN
20th Annual Questa Healing Fields Veteran's Flag Display Hwy 522 in Questa

8 AM - 6 PM
Quick Draw at Mayfest in the Mountains, and art exhibit, with reception 4 to 6 p.m.

10 AM - 2 PM
Questa Farmers Market Opens for the Summer! Every Sunday through October 6th, located at the Questa Visitor Center, 1 Hwy 38. Offering fresh local produce and live music; SNAP/EBT accepted. Info: <https://questafarmersmarket.org>, or call (575) 224-2102

10 - 6 PM
Mayfest in the Mountains at Brandenburg Park, 100 E. Main St. in Red River is replacing its Memorial Day motorcycle rally with a family-friendly event to honor our vets while offering games, workshops, exhibits, local music, and an art event. Info: call the Red River Visitor Center (575) 754-3030

4 - 6 PM
Quick-Draw event at The Vine (formerly TBucks on Main St) in Red River, presented by the Questa Creative Council. Come be a part of a lovely art reception to see the results of artwork creations. Food and drink courtesy of Red River businesses. Live music by Rebecca Caron on cello. Info: email questacreativecouncil@gmail.com

MAY 27: MEMORIAL DAY
20th Annual Questa Healing Fields Veteran's Flag Display Hwy 522 in Questa

MAY 28: TUE 6 PM
Village of Questa Town Council Meeting at Questa Village Town Hall, 2500 Old State Rd 3. For agenda and info: questa-nm.com/village-council-meeting-agenda

MAY 29: WED 5 - 7 PM
Free Starting Your Business Journey Workshop with Ayla Parker. In person at the Questa Business Bridge, located at the Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road. Explore the why, what, and how of starting your business journey. To register and for info: (575) 586-2149

Weekly

SUNDAY

Area Church Directory is on page 31, please call to confirm service times.

3 - 6 PM
Open Mic at Noisy Water Winery, 518 E. Main St, Red River. Get ready for a night of music, poetry, and laughter at Noisy Water Winery's Open Mic Night! Info: redriver.org/events/open-mic, or call (575) 754-9957

10 AM
Qigong, Online ONLY at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. Qigong Zoom link and info: yogasalaquesta.org

MONDAY

8 AM
Transportation for Qualified Seniors at Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Accepting donations, by appointment only. Info: call (575) 586-0508

10 AM
Kundalini Yoga at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. With Julian, in person only, \$8-\$15. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

11 AM - 6 PM
Game Day at Noisy Water Winery in Red River 518 E. Main St, get ready for a day filled with games, laughter, and fantastic wines! Info: call (575) 754-9957

5 PM
Free Community Yoga at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. Gentle practice with Rae in person only, free. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

7 PM
Kickboxing with Reto at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. In person only, sliding scale \$5-\$15. All classes are free for teens. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

TUESDAY

8 AM
Transportation for Qualified Seniors at Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Accepting donations, by appointment only. Info: call (575) 586-0508

4:30 - 5:30 PM
Free Kids Ballet with Miss Tuesday at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. In person only. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

5 - 7 PM
UNM-Taos HIVE Drop-In Tutoring and Computer Support at UNM-Taos HIVE 1146 Gusdorf Taos, NM 87571 (downstairs). Need computer help or tutoring? Come to the UNM-Taos HIVE for our FREE Drop-In sessions! Info: call (575) 737-6200

6 - 7:45 PM
Kundalini, Meditation and Gong at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. With Jiwanshakti in person and Online. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

WEDNESDAY

8 AM
Transportation for Qualified Seniors at Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Accepting donations, by appointment only. Info: call (575) 586-0508

9 AM
Gentle morning yoga at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. With Gaea, in person only, \$8. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

10 AM - 2 PM
Repurposing Plastic Project at Repurposing Plastic Building, 2380 Highway 522. Come smash plastic and make wire walls! At the old "Movies at Home" building opposite Sangre de Cristo Valley Market on Hwy 522. Info: call (575) 224-7386

1:30 - 2:30 PM
Wildcat Kitty Club at Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road. A weekly fun program for our youngest guests. Stories, kitty-sized activities and crafts, friendly play, and opportunities for parents and caregivers to share the joys and trials of being new at the game of raising these incredible small beings. And, there are always snacks and treats! Info: email library@villageofquesta.org, or call (575) 586-2023

5 - 7 PM
UNM-Taos HIVE Drop-In Tutoring and Computer Support at UNM-Taos HIVE 1146 Gusdorf Taos, NM 87571 (downstairs). Need computer help or tutoring? Come to the UNM-Taos HIVE for our FREE Drop-In sessions! Info: call (575) 737-6200

5:30 PM
Power Hour Yoga with Gaea at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. With Gaea in person only, \$8. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

7 PM
Kickboxing with Reto at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. In person only, sliding scale \$5-\$15. All classes free for teens. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

THURSDAY

8 AM
Transportation for Qualified Seniors at Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Accepting donations, by appointment only. Info: call (575) 586-0508

2:30 - 4:30 PM
Dropped Stitch at Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road. We knit, crochet, laugh, teach and learn. Bring your projects. All skill levels welcome. Info: call (575) 586-2023

5 - 7 PM
UNM-Taos HIVE Drop-In Tutoring and Computer Support at 1146 Gusdorf Taos, NM 87571 (downstairs). Need computer help or tutoring? Come to the UNM-Taos HIVE for our FREE Drop-In sessions! Info: call (575) 737-6200

6 PM
Thursday Night Jam Session at Rael's Market & Coffee House, 2430 NM-522, Questa. Bring your instrument to jam or just bring yourself and enjoy. Free! Info: call (575) 779-9249

FRIDAY

8:30 AM
Gentle morning yoga with Gaea at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. In person only, \$8. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

10 AM
Free Community Qigong at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. With Julian, in person only, free. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

10 AM - 2 PM
Repurposing Plastic Project at Repurposing Plastic Building, 2380 Highway 522. Come smash plastic and make wire walls! At the old "Movies at Home" building opposite Sangre de Cristo Valley Market on Hwy 522. Info: call (575) 224-7386

7 - 9 PM
Weekly Recovery Program at Living Word Ministries, 12 Llano Rd, Questa. New Thirst Christ Centered Recovery Program. Info: lwmsite.org

SUNDAY

10 AM - 2 PM
FREE One on One Computer Support at UNM-Taos HIVE 1146 Gusdorf Taos, NM 87571 (downstairs) with Robert Tourgee. Receive personalized computer support services by appointment. Book here: <https://calendly.com/taoshive-robert/45min> Info: call (575) 737-6200

10:30 AM
Free Community Tai Chi at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522. With Reto, in person only, free. Info: yogasalaquesta.org

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

Delta Airlines Remote Customer Support Positions: Delta Air Lines is seeking Remote Customer Support Specialists to join our dynamic team. In this role, you will be responsible for providing exceptional customer service to our passengers, resolving inquiries, and ensuring a positive experience throughout their journey with Delta. <https://tinyurl.com/yvt7tdzb>

Wastewater Treatment Plant Technician Be involved in projects with our Mining Team and be a part of a growing organization that meets our client's objectives and solves their challenges. In this role you will be responsible for performing and overseeing operations and maintenance (O&M) of the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility, and associated site structures. <https://tinyurl.com/mr25dze5>

Entry Security Guard Assistant, New Mexico Professional Group: Our client, a large, well-known company located in Questa, is now hiring security guards! Security guards are responsible for answering alarms, responding to calls for service, and may apprehend or detain individuals who pose a threat to security. As a security guard, you will monitor access to the company's property and buildings, in order to prevent or stop incidents, such as theft or violence, from occurring on company grounds. To apply, visit Entry Security Guard Assistant job in Questa, NM (newmexicoprofessionalgroupp.com)

NOTICES

Questa Senior Center Lunches. Lunches are no longer served to-go. Lunch is served from noon to 1 p.m. and the recommended donation is upward of \$1.50 each. 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call (575) 586-0508 for more information.

SLV Spay & Neuter Alliance Mobile Clinic offers low-cost spay and neuter services for cats and dogs in San Luis, Alamosa, and other towns in southern Colorado on a rotating basis. Surgeries include age-appropriate rabies and distemper vaccines. Microchips, bordetella vaccines, dewormer, nail trims, and mat removal are available at additional cost. Book appointments easily online at slvna.org or call (719) 657-7076.

Free Transportation for Qualified Seniors Monday through Thursday. Donations are encouraged. Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call (575) 586-0508 for more information.

Repurposing Plastic Project: Wednesdays & Fridays 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Come smash plastic and make wire walls! Meet the team, work your body, lift your spirit, and help the planet! At the RPP World Headquarters, the old "Movies at Home" building opposite the supermarket on Hwy 522. For more info, call or text (575) 224-7386.

North Central New Mexico Food Pantry: Second and fourth Fridays, 10 a.m. – noon: 140 Embargo Rd. in Questa. If you need an emergency food box or other information, please call: Jeannie Masters (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194, or Nancy Parker (575) 586-2096 or (505) 699-7563. To make a donation, go to ncfpquesta.com or mail to: North Central Food Pantry, PO Box 1076, Questa, NM 87556. For more information, please email wrmesquire2@gmail.com. If you would like to volunteer, please call Jeannie (numbers above).

Questa One-on-One In-Person Business Counseling with Director of the Small Business Development Center at UNM-Taos Anwar Kaelin. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL offered on the third Thursday of every month, 1– 4 p.m., at the Questa Visitor Center. Business owners, independent contractors, and entrepreneurs in the Questa area can receive free one-on-one business consulting and support in planning, marketing, regulatory compliance, technology development, accessing capital, international trade, and more. Also offered via Zoom on the same day 2– 3 p.m.: <https://zoom.us/j/5757376219>. Join by phone: (346) 248-7799 with ID (575) 737-6219. For an appointment, or more information, contact Anwar at anwar@unm.edu



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Father Andrew Ifele (575) 586-0470
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Costilla - Sagrado Corazon - Sunday 9 a.m.
Cerro - Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe - 2nd & 4th Saturdays 4 p.m.
Amalia - Santo Niño - 1st & 3rd Saturdays 4 p.m.

FREEDOM CENTER CHURCH
(previously Harvest Questa)
Pastors Kristi & Johnny Gonzales
2558 Hwy 522, Questa
Sunday Service 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
(575) 770-1714
Visit us online: freedomquesta.com

LIVING WORD MINISTRIES
Pastors Peter and Gayle Martinez
12 Llano Road, Questa
Service: Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Nursery and Kids' Church at 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.
www.lwmsite.com (575) 586-1587

PATH OF LOVE
Sunday 7:30 a.m. class and meditation in-person north of Questa or on Zoom. For more info: (575) 770-1682 or gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com

THEOSOPHY
Northern New Mexico Alice Bailey Study Group.
Sunday and Wednesday 10 a.m.- NOON on Zoom.
For more info, contact Francis at oeaohoo17@gmail.com

QUESTA CHURCH OF CHRIST
2 miles north of Questa on State Road 522
Sunday Bible Class Sunday 9:30 a.m.
followed by worship at 10:15 a.m.

KAGYU MILA GURU SANGHA
Tibetan Buddhism
Monday 11 a.m. Green Tara. Friday 1 pm Chenrezig both in-person and on Zoom. For more info www.earthjourney.org or contact Gabrielle at info@earthjourney.org or (575) 770-1682

KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
(575) 586-1947

AMALIA

SANTO NIÑO MISSION CHURCH
1st & 3rd Saturdays 4 p.m.

ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Fellowship 3rd Sunday of the month
Highway 196, Amalia
Pastors: Lorenzo & Arleen Lucero
(575) 770-5716

RED RIVER

FAITH MOUNTAIN FELLOWSHIP
Corner of River Street and Copper King Trail
Sunday 10:30 a.m.
First Baptist Church of Red River
103 High Cost Trail
Sundays 8:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
Pastor Joe Phillips (575) 754-2882

ST. EDWIN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
North end of Silver Bell Trail, Red River
Saturday 6 p.m. (Confession prior to Mass or by appt.) Father Andrew Ifele (575) 586-0470

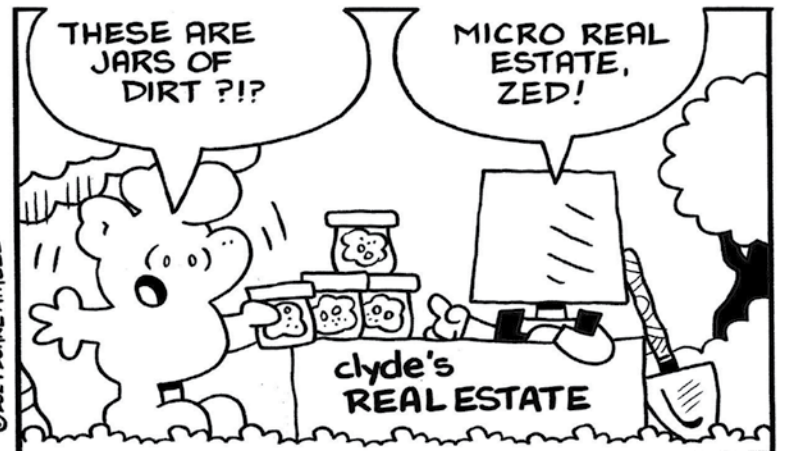
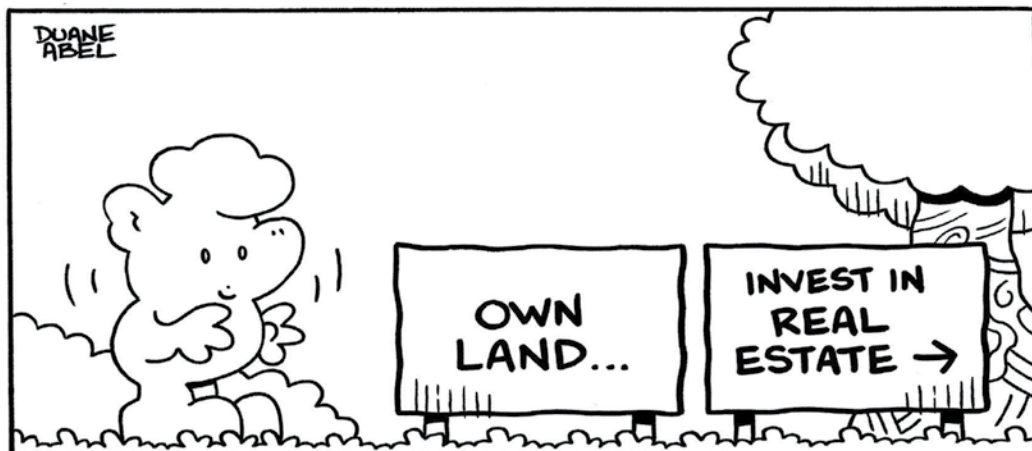


AA MEETINGS
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QUESTA: Sundays 10-11 a.m.
Questa Youth Center

RED RIVER: Tuesdays 7- 8 p.m.
417 E. High St.
(Erik's Workshop)

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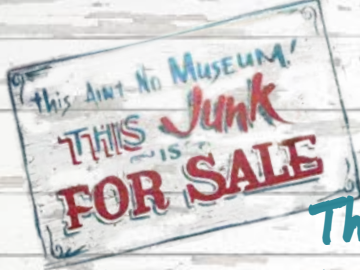
Questa Farmers Market
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